■ WORLD / A9
Nearly 100 firms linked to Thai PM Thaksin face boycott

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Gen. Danilo Lim to NBI: There was no coup plot, no alliance with Reds

■ NEWS / A3
Sandiganbayan revokes sequestration of 4 Lucio Tan firms

■ NEWS / A2
Journalists file petition to stop gov't from censoring media

GMA invocation of God angers religious leaders

By Christian V. Esguerra and Gil C. Cabacungan

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo's invocation of God to justify her stay in office sowed questions of legitimacy has unsettled, if not angered, some cle-

LOCAL A12

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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Samuel Lee released after posting P360,000 bail

By Luige A. del Puerto and Armand N. Nocum

SAMUEL LEE, A SUSPECTED SHABUSILAW WITH purported ties to First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo, was released by the police yesterday after posting cash.

"Lee posted P360,000 in cash (and) (he was) ordered released (by a Manila Regional Trial Court). We released him at around 6 p.m.," Supt.

MANILA CITY, A4

17 liable for stampede

One woman in women's mind on Women's Day

By Tarra K. Quismundo

FOR THE THOUSANDS WHO marched in Makati City yesterday, International Women's Day was all about one woman: President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Housewives, teachers, students, professionals, children and members of the urban poor renewed their call for the ouster of Ms Arroyo in the first major protest action since she lifted her declaration of a state of national emergency on Friday.

"We're certainly not celebrating but We're repudiating her on International Women's Day. That's a slap on her. You cannot celebrate women's rights and welfare and the struggle to liberate women without denouncing this particular woman," said Carol Araullo, chair of the militant Bagong Alyansang Makabayan.

"She shows the worst qualities of masochists. She is boastful, she trample upon the rights of others ... and because the majority of Filipinos are women, she is abusing the rights of women," Araullo said.

Corazon "Dinky" Soliman, Ms Arroyo's resigned social welfare secretary, said it was unfortunate that the incumbent happened to be a woman.

"It is one of the ironies. She is not honest to the principles of women in the Philippines and the women's movement in general, [which are] based on truth, justice and peace ... All of that she was not able to fulfill."

Among 10 of the key officials who resigned in July last year, the height of the controversy that implicated Ms Arroyo in election fraud, Soliman remembered celebrating International Women's Day with the President in Malacañang.

ONE WOMAN | A6

TAKING IT IN STRIDE: Even as the rallies of the Int'l Women's Day heat up with clamor for her ouster, a cool President Arroyo walks back to her Palace office after the live broadcast of her regular roundtable discussion.

Criminal raps poised vs Revillame, TV execs

By Margaux C. Ortiz

CRIMINAL CHARGES WERE RECOMMENDED yesterday by the National Bureau of Investigation against those it deemed responsible for the Feb. 4 stampede at the PhilSports Arena (formerly Ultra) in Pasig City that killed 71 people and injured 957 others.

Facing charges of "reckless imprudence resulting in multiple homicide and multiple injuries" in the Department of Justice are 12 officers and employees of the ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp., including Charo Santos-Concio, executive vice president; Maria Socorro Vidanes, senior vice president of the television production department; Cipriano "Boss" Laspo, assistant vice president and head of security; and Willie de "Willie" Revillame, host of the daily game show "Wowowee."

Five other persons outside the network are also facing similar charges.

Each count of the offense is punishable by up to six years in prison.

The NBI recommended the filing of administrative charges against Pasig Mayor Vicente Eusebio in the Department of Interior and Local Government, for issuing a permit to the network without asking for a comprehensive security plan.

NBI officer in charge Nestor Mantaring said the investigators cleared the Pasig police and the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority of liability. He said ABS-CBN personnel had not coordinated with the government agencies in the planning of the event.

In a statement, ABS-CBN expressed concern over what it said was the "selective manner" with which the NBI conducted the investigation, "particularly in not charging members of the [Philippine National Police]" and "overlooking and disregarding their negligence and culpabilities by

17 LIABLE | A6

Singapore rewards 2 Filipinas with cash

By Yuk Cantreras

OVER A DECADE AGO, SINGAPore drew outrage among Filipinos over the execution of domestic helper Flor Contemplacion, her story still a haunting reminder of the stress and uncertainties faced by the Filipino "DH" abroad.

But last month, the tiny but affluent city-state honored two Filipino maids, chosen from among tens of thousands of foreign workers employed there.

Elizabeth Tamor Quiatchon, 38, was named Singapore's "Foreign Domestic Worker of the Year," the Department of Foreign Affairs reported yesterday. The citation came with a S$2,500 (P82,500) cash prize.

Another Filipino, Marina Bandoy Garcia, placed third and the award carried a S$1,200 (P39,600) purse.

Quiatchon has been working

SINGAPORE A8

Antiriot cops mar women's rally, arrest lawmaker

By DJ Yap

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY WAS marked yesterday by antiriot police dispersing an assembly of women activists and arresting two of their leaders, including Akbayan Rep. Risa Hontiveros-Baraquel.

"This arrest is veritable proof that despite the lifting of Presidential Proclamation No. 1017, the President is bent on violating civil liberties to silence those who simply wish to have the truth exposed," Baraquel later said at Camp Karingal, where she was taken.

She was released yesterday afternoon after a group of lawyers and her fellow lawmakers, including Batasang Pambansa Rep. Renato Magtubo and Albay Rep. Edcel Lagman, invoked her immunity from suit as a member of Congress.

But ground commander Senior Supt. Elinor San Diego said Baraquel had only been "invited for questioning."

Also taken into police custody was Alliance of Progressive Labor (APL) secretary general Joshua Mata, who was plucked from the crowd during the dispersal.

Mata said the rough dispersal was proof that the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo was "patently insecure" because it had to resort to coercive ways to stifle dissent.

According to Akbayan information officer Percy Cendaña, Mata was charged with violating Batas Pambansa Blg. 880, or the Illegal assembly law, before an assistant city prosecutor.

Baraquel's supporters said she would file charges of physical assault, grave misconduct and violation of parliamentary

ANTIRIOT | A6

BODILY CARRIED into a police vehicle, Akbayan Rep. Risa Hontiveros-Baraquel tries to break free from the cops who claim to be "inviting" her "for questioning."

'Superman's' widow dies of lung cancer; 44

NOW AND FOREVER: Dana Reeve had sung the song in January. They are now together again never more to part.

WHITE PLAINS, NEW YORK—A YEAR and a half after her husband died, the widow of Christopher Reeve of the Superman" movies, succumbed to lung cancer. She was 44.

Dana Reeve, the singer-actress married the scrapping star and then devoted herself to his care and his cause after he was paralyzed.

Although Dana Reeve had announced her cancer diagnosis in August last year—to an outpouring of sympathy and support from admirers

SUPERMAN'S | A6

LPG shows poverty now wears a woman's face

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau
and Kate Pedroso
PDI Research

POVERTY WEARS A WOMAN'S FACE.

Many households in Metro Manila cannot afford liquefied petroleum gas, according to a survey conducted by the Center for Women's Studies (CWS).

Myrna, a government employee from Laguna, now uses wood instead of LPG if she has to boil meat—a task that takes more time and, therefore, consumes more fuel. That practice has allowed her to extend her LPG consumption to two months from one and a half months.

Jo, a manicurist from Laguna, finds it cheaper to buy her family's food from a nearby store. If she has to, she uses her LPG only for frying. The current LPG tank she uses was bought last December.

Mary Jane Guan, CWS executive director, said on Tuesday that the survey put a "woman's face" to the state of poverty in the country.

Speaking at a forum at the University of the Philippines Baguio, Guan said 39 percent of 200 mothers that the CWS randomly surveyed in January said they had abandoned LPG in favor of inexpensive

LPG | A7

WEATHER FORECAST

CIRCUIT Cyber Pinoy on Wednesday all systems check take left window takeaway set update Nonkennery to come enhanced rate see Bubbles with can Type Sub-Saab are systems. Tax out if care see House of to may all customers.

Second FRONTPAGE

Journalists slam censorship

By Alcuin Papa

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO'S DECLARATION of a state of national emergency has placed press freedoms under siege again 20 years after the fall of the dictator Ferdinand Marcos, journalists said yesterday.

In a petition before the Court of Appeals, nine journalist groups and organizations and about three dozen individual news people asked the court to stop the government from imposing censorship and prior restraint on the press.

"The threat of official intervention ... in the form of administrative sanctions or criminal prosecution ... is just as damaging to a free press as the fact of it," the petition said.

Although the President lifted the emergency last Friday, government moves against the media could have a lasting chilling effect, the journalists said.

Ms. Arroyo said she imposed the state of emergency, which ended last Friday, to foil a coup plot by a cabal of leftists and rightists.

Magnified in media

In her decree, Proclamation 1017, the President said the drama of the coup plotters "have been recklessly magnified by certain segments of the national media."

It gave the government powers to ban rallies, arrest people without warrants and crack down on inflammatory media.

Police subsequently raided the Daily Tribune, a newspaper critical of Ms. Arroyo, and Bayan were deployed around the two largest TV networks.

The National Telecommunications Commission also militarized radio and TV stations of publications on the broadcast of "rebellious, terrorist propaganda" and statements that "propose or incite treason, rebellion or sedition."

In a phone interview, Maris Rosca, head of the news division of ABS-CBN, one of the court petitioners, said the suit was their way of "holding officials accountable for what they say."

The petition asked the CA to prohibit Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez, Philippine National Police chief Gen. Arturo Lomibao and National Telecommunications Commission Chairman Cloyd Tamano from "stopping, prohibiting or censoring the publication or airing of speech..."

It said that even with the lifting of Proclamation 1017, the three officials continue to "review and exercise [such] chosen discretion."

Interviewed last Tuesday for the first time since lifting the state of emergency, Ms. Arroyo reminded journalists that "freedom comes with responsibility."

"I do not always seek praise whenever I act. I think for a journalist who does not just praise, to her often criticism, but also knows the limits," she told GMA radio anchor Mike Enriquez.

Vice President Noli de Castro yesterday said that only "key journalists" are unable to achieve a balanced coverage.

A former broadcast journalist, De Castro said he agreed with the President that the media should be "fair" in their reporting.

Asked if he thought the media have been fair, De Castro said: "There are those who are and [in] that there are also those who are fair, especially the censored broadcasters." With AFP and Nikko Dizon

WHAT COUP PLOT? Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim talks to reporters at the National Bureau of Investigation to deny allegations of a conspiracy of renegade soldiers and communist rebels to oust President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. GMA Net photo

No coups, says sacked general

By Margaux Ortiz

ARMY BRIG. GEN. DANILO LIM, WHO WAS dismissed from his post and detained for allegedly planning against President Macapagal-Arroyo, denied that he had conspired with communist rebels to oust the President.

"There was no coup. It is not true I am involved in an alliance with the Left. I will never allow myself to be in that position," said Lim, the former First Scout Ranger Regiment commander in his first public appearance since his arrest on Feb. 24.

Lim, who appeared at the National Bureau of Investigation yesterday to testify in the inquiry into the Time magazine article implicating him, later faced reporters and answered questions on the various issues he is facing.

Lim, who served at the NBI under heavy guard, denied any knowledge of alleged efforts by the renegade Magdalo group of officers to recruit soldiers and ally with leftist groups to oust the President.

"It would be unthinkable for me, a general of the AFP and commander of the Scout Ranger regiment to enter into such arrangement. How can I have my men if I deal with the Left?" he said.

Lim said Armed Forces Chief Gen. Generoso Senga "would testify that I did not conceive them to join any coup plot on Feb. 23."

Senga put Lim under his custody after recovering an alleged plan by the dismissed Scout Ranger commander to lead his troops to an opposition rally that would call for the President's resignation.

Lim said Senator Edgardo Espiritu yesterday stood just on its claim that a cabal of renegade soldiers, including Lim, were in a conspiracy with leftist groups to overthrow Ms Arroyo.

Espiritu said the evidences would be made public when Lim and the other alleged conspirators are charged in a court-martial.

Lim said he must gave any orders for his troops to move to Silver Glands from Bulacan.

"I should have had my Scout Rangers with me if I was ordered involved in a coup plot," he said.

Lim admitted that his regiment received a P1-million donation from the Lakas-ng Kawal Pilipino Foundation set up by deposed President Joseph Estrada, one to call for resignation.

But he said it was received by the regiment's sergeant-major, not himself, in behalf of a cooperative which Lim established three years ago to lend money to soldiers' families.

"I could not care less about the source of the money as long as it would be used for the soldiers and their families," Lim said.

"But it was definitely not used for any coup attempt," he added.

Lim also denied heading a military breakaway group called Para la Bayan, which he said was the fictitious the Armed Forces Movement's move in the late 1980s.

"My name is not in the listing issued by people (whom) I do not know from rebels," he said with some irritation.

He recalled having been involved in a young Army captain in the 1989 coup attempt against President Aquino, and has been demanding twelve young officers to follow the same path.

Brigadier General Ruben D. Jallorina, the head of the NBI Special Task Force, said Lim was asked to appear in the agency's probe into a Time magazine article implicating him and Gen. "Playing" Espiritu and Pastor "Boy" Saavedra in the foiled coup.

In a letter to the NBI, Lim said he "did not consider with anyone against the President and neither did I talk to Mr. Sayson as reported" in the Time article.

But NBI officer in charge Honor Macaraig said that while Lim denied having knowledge of the alleged conversation with Sayson, the general did not discuss the possibility of talking to Sayson on Feb. 23.

The Philippine Army leadership apparently sees nothing wrong in the First Scout Ranger Regiment's admitting P4 million from ousted President Estrada.

Brig. Bartolome Bacarro, an Army spokesman, said what mattered was that the withdrawal was made in the name of the Scout Rangers' cooperative and that the money appeared to be intact. With till C. Cabacungan, Dona Pazzibugan and AFP

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	Training on Operation and Maintenance	1 set	
III	Supply, Installation and Commissioning	1 set	P 1,000,000.00
	Training on Operation and Maintenance	1 set	P 150,000.00
IV	Supply, Installation and Commissioning	1 set	P 1,000,000.00
	Training on Operation and Maintenance	1 set	P 150,000.00
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Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the PMO/End-User's unit and examine the Bidding Documents during office hours from **March 10, 2006** at the address given below: **P.O. Box 1, Tuguegarao City, Cagayan**.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below from **March 10 to 31, 2006** and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Five Thousand Pesos (P5,000.00), either in cash or Manager's/Cashier's Check. It may also be downloaded free of charge from the website of the PMO/End-User, if available.

The PMO/CBAC/BAC/PMT will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties who have purchased a complete set of Bidding Documents on **March 31, 2006, 1:30 PM** at the PCAB Boardroom, 3rd Floor, BALM Building, Barrio Ibanez, Aparri City.

Bids and bidding documents must be delivered to the address below on or before **10:30 AM of March 31, 2006**. All Bids must be accompanied by a bid security in any of the forms and amounts stipulated in Section 27.2(a) of the IRR of R.A. 9184, in the amount of [illegible] (P [illegible]), if applicable. All bids must be accompanied by the latest Income Tax Return filed manually or through the electronic system. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Bid opening shall be on **March 31, 2006/ 10:30 AM** at Pilot's Boardroom, 2nd Floor, BALM Building, Barrio Ibanez, Aparri City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend the proceedings.

The PMO/CBAC/BAC/PMT reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

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(sgd.) **FREDERICK A. TANGONAN**
Acting Chairman, PMO/End-User Bids and Awards Committee

Sequestration of 4 Tan firms revoked

By Helen F. Flores

THE SANDIGANBAYAN FIFTH DIVISION yesterday revoked the government's sequestration of four firms owned by tuipan Lucio Tan after the Presidential Commission on Good Government failed to prove the legality of the sequestration orders issued in 1986.

In a 58-page decision issued last March 2 by Justice Teresita Diaz Baldos, the anticourt ordered the government to cease from further involvement in the control and management of Allied Banking Corp., Fortune Tobacco Corp., Fortunet Paints and Chemicals Corp.

The anticourt declared as null and void the writs of sequestration issued against Tan's shares in Allied Bank, Fortunet Paints, Fortune Tobacco and Shareholdings.

The Sandigan also modified the writs of sequestration issued on the shares of stock of Mariano Ermenglido, Iris Holdings and Development Corp., Virgo Holdings and Development Corp., and Jewel Holdings, Inc. in the four companies.

"The Court finds and so holds that the questioned writs of sequestration were issued without the requisite prima facie factual basis. It follows that the properties covered thereby are 'ill-gotten' wealth. "[There is] sufficient reason to regard the Court to declare them as null and void and to terminate the role of government as conservator of the properties covered thereby," the Sandiganbayan ruling said.

Fifth Division Associate Justices Roland B. Jurado and Gregory Ong.

In September 1986, Tan and his co-petitioners asked the Supreme Court to nullify the sequestration orders but the high court referred the matter to the Sandiganbayan on Feb. 28, 1990.

The petitioners challenged the PCGG takeover on the grounds that the writs were void because they were signed by only two members of the commission; the writs have lapsed into nullexistry for lack of judicial confirmation that the properties they covered were ill-gotten wealth; and that the writs were issued despite the absence of a prima facie evidence that the subject firms constitute ill-gotten wealth.

The Sandiganbayan overruled the first argument noting that signatures by two PCGG commissioners were all that was needed to make them valid.

Likewise, it held that the writs did not expire because the PCGG filed the case within the required six-month period from the ratification of the 1987 Constitution.

However, it found merit in the third ground raised by Tan and his co-petitioners, noting that there was nothing in the 196 pieces of documentary evidence submitted by the government that would support the issuance of the writs of sequestration.

Sandigan orders arrest of general's family

By Helen F. Flores

THE SANDIGANBAYAN YESTERDAY ORdered the arrest of the wife and three sons of retired Armed Forces comptroller Maj. Gen. Carlos F. Garcia in connection with a P302-million plunder case filed against all five of them by the Ombudsman nearly a year ago.

Justice Edilberto Sandoval, chair of the Sandiganbayan's Second Division, presided over the hall by issuing the order against Garcia's wife Cleofa and their children, Ian Carl, Juan Paolo and Timothy Mark.

Garcia himself, who was sentenced by a military court last December to two years in hard labor, has been detained at Camp Crame. He was convicted of conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman and conduct prejudicial to good order for not declaring his total assets and for becoming a "government," which signified 6% residence.

The arrest order came after the court upheld the Ombudsman's finding of probable cause to prosecute the Garcias on a charge of conspiracy to amass at least P302.2 million in ill-gotten wealth from 1995 to 2009, or from the time Garcia was an Army colonel until he became AFP deputy chief of staff for comptrollership.

The charge sheet described Garcia's wife and children as his "conduits and willing accomplices."

PNP seeks custody of 5 party-list solons

By Leila A. del Puerto and Miriam Bordadora

THE POLICE YESTERDAY pursued for the custody of five militant lawmakers charged with rebellion but said they would rather have their way if the House of Representatives would release their suspects, a police spokesperson said.

Party-list Representatives Satur Ocampo, Liza Maza, Joel Virador, Rafael Mariano and Teodoro Casiño were earlier placed under the custody of House Speaker Jose de Venecia.

The Philippine National Police indicated that the five would be detained at the PNP Custodial Center in Camp Crame once Congress turn over the lawmakers to them.

The Custodial Center holds a few high-profile persons suspected of involvement in criminal and terrorist activities, such as the notorious police renegade Rizal Alih.

Mudjahrudin Ibrp. Ulpin Bilkan, another lawmaker charged with rebellion, was brought to the same detention center before he was transferred to the PNP General Hospital.

After Maza left Congress for the Senate on Monday night, the police petitioned the Department of Justice seeking custody of the five lawmakers.

"We are on the waiting mode at this time," said police spokesperson Sr. Insp. Samuel Pagdilao. "We will have to wait for the request of the DOJ."

The police officer assured the five congressmen and their supporters that none would be arrested should a preliminary investigation push through at the DOJ.

Noli has high hopes for doomed Filipina

By Nikko Dizon

VICE PRESIDENT Noli de Castro arrived yesterday from Kuwait, hopeful that Filipina worker Muwalla Ibrahim Mohammad Ismael would be spared from the death penalty by the government of the oil-rich country.

"I feel that we have hope that even if we cannot be able to get the victim's family to forgive Rasaris, at least her punishment could be lessened. Those were the words of the vice president," De Castro told reporters at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

Pinoy toddler to undergo liver transplant in HK

THANKS TO GENEROUS DONORS, A sick Filipino boy will finally undergo a liver transplant today in Hong Kong, with his own mother serving as donor.

The latest to contribute and finally enable the toddler's family to raise the amount required in the two-top crisis was a Singaporean couple, the Department of Foreign Affairs reported yesterday.

The couple, who requested anonymity, donated HK$250,000 ($5.1 million) to help save the life of two-and-a-half year-old Mark Jairus Mendoza, according to the Philippine consulate in the former British colony.

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SUPPLYLINK INTRODUCTION

SupplyLink 2006 is the Philippine Institute for Supply Management's 14th Annual Conference and Trade Exhibit. SupplyLink 2006 highlights supply chain transformation as the most effective way of making a difference in business organizations. The event tackles the different facets of supply chain management on supply and general management, strategic sourcing, supplier relationship management, services and logistics providing its participants with a comprehensive view of how supply chains can be transformed to complement and create more business objectives.

Considered as the country's largest gathering of top supply management professionals, SupplyLink features a priceless face-to-face educational experience through our show courses, research speakers and networking opportunities. More so, it showcases the latest technologies in the areas of office equipment, materials handling and storage, transportation and distribution, MRO supplies, IT applications, among others.

Through the years, PISM has been consistently providing its delegates the most stimulating, appropriate and relevant information in the purchasing and supply chain management course.

ABOUT PISM

Founded in 1968, Philippine Institute for Supply Management (PISM) remains to be at the forefront of the country's supply management evolution. PISM, a non-stock, non-profit organization of supply management professionals, champions new systems, methodologies and strategic practices.

From its 98 member companies during its first year, PISM has close to 300 member companies coming from various industries located in Metro Manila and 3 provincial chapters to boot.

Through its seminars, industry group forums, conferences and other activities, PISM continues to be an effective source of new methods, technologies and ideas from the business world. The association also serves as a venue for networking and benchmarking among its members.

PISM's mission is "To be a key contributor to our member companies' success and to the country's global competitiveness by championing the excellence of the supply management profession and the continuous development of its practitioners to the highest ethical and world class standards".

PISM also envisions itself to be a world class prime mover and resource source of supply chain management and leadership excellence in Asia.

True to its vision and mission, PISM is continuously strengthening its alliances with international organizations. It is a CPM (Certified Purchasing Manager) allied member of the Institute for Supply Management (ISM) based in Arizona, USA, an affiliate of the International Federation of Purchasing and Supply Management (IFPSM) based in Netherlands and the International Trade Center - United Nations (ITC-UNCTAD/WTO) (WTO SITC DOC).

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PISM as an allied member of the Institute for Supply Management (ISM) based in Arizona, USA offers the globally recognized designation for supply chain management professionals. The Certified Purchasing Manager (C.P.M.) review program is designed for experienced supply managers and focuses on managerial and leadership skills, plus a variety of specialized functions designed to enhance the effectiveness of supply managers within their organizations.

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Our courses start with fundamentals leading to advanced courses and general management. Specific courses or programs can be also tailor made to the requirements of each company or institution.

Messages

Warmest greetings to the Philippine Institute for Supply Management (PISM) as you mark the 14th Annual Conference and Trade Exhibit entitled "SUPPLYLINK 2006." Your theme, "Supply Management, Making A Difference," indicates your earnest desire to provide industrial users and customers with latest technology and products that are helpful in purchasing and materials management. May this trade show-cum-conference be an effective springboard for the application of the latest technologies in our various industries. By being the best in your field of supply management, you assist your clients into becoming the best also in the global market. Let us work hand-in-hand to create a conducive working environment for all local and foreign investors. We can also in our campaign by showing the love of our workers. We can treat the skills and assets a better life for our people.

Mabuhay sa inyong lahat!

(SGD.) GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President Republic of the Philippines

Supply Management is a function cropping over the limelight taking center stage amid all the activities that make business and organizations successful. There is then an increasing need for supply professionals to be equipped with the skill set and competencies to meet the challenges of the industry. Professionals that will utilize them to respond to the new rule. Recognizing this need and the widening scope of supply management, PISM is leading the charge to be at the forefront of the profession. Its continuous improvement programs are geared not only to providing its members and others with the key educational, informational and networking tools to succeed but also to educating and promoting supply management throughout the business world. One such offering is our annual conference and trade exhibit. The conference's theme, the home of this year's conference, "Supply Management: Making a Difference" have worked hand in glove with SupplyLink 2006: Making A Difference. I hope that you are able to maximize all the learning and networking opportunities it offers.

Maraming Salamat!

(SGD.) ARTHUR D. DE AGUAS
President, PISM

The organizing committee and myself would like to welcome you to the 14th Philippine Institute for Supply Management (PISM) Annual Conference and Trade Exhibit - SupplyLink 2006. This year's theme, "Supply Management: Making A Difference," speaks to many of the challenges that the Philippine business environment has helped a lot to today's corporations' Information Community. Purchasers and Supply Management professionals are challenged to remain updated in this ever-changing environment. SupplyLink 2006 kick off with an Executive Forum for Supply Management Professionals. Likewise, we will have quality seminars for our 23 technical sessions on different aspects of the supply management profession will give us inputs, insights and solutions on how to cope with today's trends and challenges.

I thank you for being a part of this year Conference and Exhibit.

(SGD.) ANGEL V. GATCHALIAN, JR., C.P.M.
Vice President, PISM

Welcome to the SupplyLink 2006 entitled Supply Management: Making A Difference. We are pleased to present to you our line-up of select and highly relevant technical and general management topics to put you in the forefront of current trends and issues in supply management whether your role is operational or on the front line or strategic in nature. Whatever it is you do, it is very well if I agree to engage in continuous exposure and learning. We want you to make a difference. This year we have invited key executives of various companies in charge of supply management for a special conference called Executive Forum on Supply management issues at that level. Once again we hope that you will benefit from this year's conference that dedicates one of the sessions to executives and other practitioners of supply chain management particularly in the field of procurement and materials management with the theme of the profession. The seminars and workshops are designed with emphasis to give their companies a greater competitiveness through supply chain innovations. On behalf of the officers and directors of the Philippine Institute for Supply Management and the Secretariat, 2006 committee, MARHABA!

(SGD.) PAUL A. ABBEY
SupplyMail Director-in-Charge, PISM

The supply management function has become a critical competitive arena of organizations today brought about by the continuous pressures to achieve cost, better quality and faster time to market. Organizations who are better equipped and who are more efficient supply management are at better position to outmaneuver competitiveness. The Philippine Institute for Supply Management (PISM) aims to provide its members the opportunity to enhance and harness the competencies, knowledge and skills of its membership, the supply management professionals in the world class contributor in their respective organizations. This is done through various educational research and development, benchmarking best practices, trainings, seminars and conferences. Today, we are holding our 2006 SupplyLink, its annual conference geared towards sharing of best practices in the area of supply management. Our theme for this year is very appropriate and timely. For supply management has become the forefront of every organization's success. It is truly "Supply Management: Making A Difference" in organizations today.

On behalf of PISM's officers and board of directors, welcome, enjoy and learn. Let's make it happen.

(SGD.) ARTHUR D. AGUAS, JR., C.P.M.
SupplyMail Director-in-Charge, PISM

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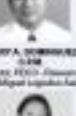

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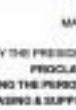

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MALACAÑANG
Manila
BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES
PROCLAMATION NO. 1020
DECLARING THE PERIOD FROM MARCH 6 TO 10, 2006 AS SUPPLYLINK 2006 & PURCHASING & SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT WEEK

WHEREAS the Philippine Institute for Supply Management (PISM), is a non-stock, non-profit organization of purchasing and materials managers of the country's top corporations;

WHEREAS purchasing and materials managers see PISM help upgrade the quality and competitiveness of Philippine goods and services for both the domestic and foreign markets;

WHEREAS it is desirable that the important role played by the purchasing and materials managers in commerce and industry be brought to the attention of the people;

WHEREFORE the PISM will celebrate its 14th National Convention and Exhibit this year called SUPPLYLINK 2006, with the theme "SUPPLY MANAGEMENT: MAKING A DIFFERENCE".

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO, President of the Republic of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by law, do hereby declared the period from March 6 to 10, 2006 as Purchasing and Supply Chain Management Week.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the Republic of the Philippines to be affixed.

Done in the City of Manila, this 2nd day of March, in the year of Our Lord, Two Thousand and Six.

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Angara wants Cha-cha to cut GMA, Noli terms

By TJ Burgonio

SEN. EDGARDO ANGARA PROposed yesterday that Congress amend the Constitution but limit the changes to revamping the Commission on Elections and cutting the terms of both President Macapagal-Arroyo and Vice President Noli de Castro to coincide the country from the political morass.

"If we agree on this with the House, we will file a joint resolution to shorten the term of both the President and Vice President so that it will usher in a fresh election.... Then the question of disqualification and mandate will be laid to rest," Angara told reporters.

He said the joint resolution would limit the task for amending the Charter, with the amendments "strictly confined to the two propositions."

Mobilizing said supporters of Ms Arroyo in the House of Representatives quickly shot down the proposal.

'Suicide as human'

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita called the proposal "suicide as human," or a rush in the dark, saying that the Constitution provides for specific procedures on how to change elective officials.

"I happen to have talked to a source who told me if that happens, definitely he will not support it because there's no basis in law," Ermita said.

House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles and Rep. Prospero Pichay, vice chair of the Commission on Appointments, said in a statement that the House majority would not support Angara's proposal because what it wants is called a constituent parliamentary system of government.

The congressmen said that having the President cut short her term to go through another election "does not appear to be a desirable solution to the impasse."

"The main problem ... is that those against the President want nothing else but to oust her even by force which is against the law," the congressmen's statement added. "Let's just follow the Constitution which set for its five-year mandate and we won't have problems anymore."

'Political paralysis'

Angara said that to end the current "political paralysis," Ms Arroyo and De Castro should cut their terms to pave the way for snap elections under a revamped Commission on Elections.

"So long as this political standoff remains where the administration is digging in and the opposition is just crying out loud, but in the meantime the business of the nation is practically non-existent, we really have this situation of paralysis," he said.

Asked when he thought the 4-year terms of the ten highest officials should be cut, Andaya replied, "No time frame. We must better focus on this now and we go to determine it because it is like preconditioning if we mention a fixed schedule."

Angara said he thought Ms Arroyo "will listen" to his proposed Senate-House resolutions.

"The advantage of this option is that it is the people who decide. She will not say that she was forced out of it, it is the people who have spoken. And it is a painless way. I will take the position if it saves us lose chaos," he added.

With Christine O. Avendaño

Pfizer sues gov't for patent infringement

PFIZER INC. SAID YESTERDAY IT HAS FILED suit in the Philippines to stop the government from importing unauthorized copies of drugs with patents that are owned by the US-based pharmaceutical giant.

However, government officials insisted the drug they wanted to import was made by a Pfizer licensee in India and that no imports would be made until the patent expired.

Pfizer said it filed a civil suit in a Manila court last week charging the state-owned Philippine International Trading Corp. (PITC) and the regulatory body Bureau of Food and Drugs (BFAD) with patent infringement.

The suit alleges the government was preparing to import a version of the Pfizer's anti-hypertension drug, Norvasc, from India, made by a company not licensed to produce the drug.

The company also warned that such unauthorized copies may not be safe.

Teddy Sitoza, executive vice president of PITC said the government was only planning to import the version of Norvasc when the patent expires, which Pfizer said will occur in June 2007.

He said the drug would be imported from Shionogi and Ind-Swift remarked that it would come from licensed producers of Pfizer.

PITC president Roberto Pagdanganan said in a statement the Norvasc imports would serve as low-cost substitutes.

He accused Pfizer of "fantasizing PITC" with its suit.

Pfizer spokesmen alleged the government's procedures would allow the importations of the drug even without informing the company even if the patent had not expired. AFP

Ulap presses Cha-cha bid

THE UMBRELLA GROUP OF 1.7 million local executives across the country is determined to put the issue of Charter change back on the national agenda after President Macapagal-Arroyo lifted the state of national emergency.

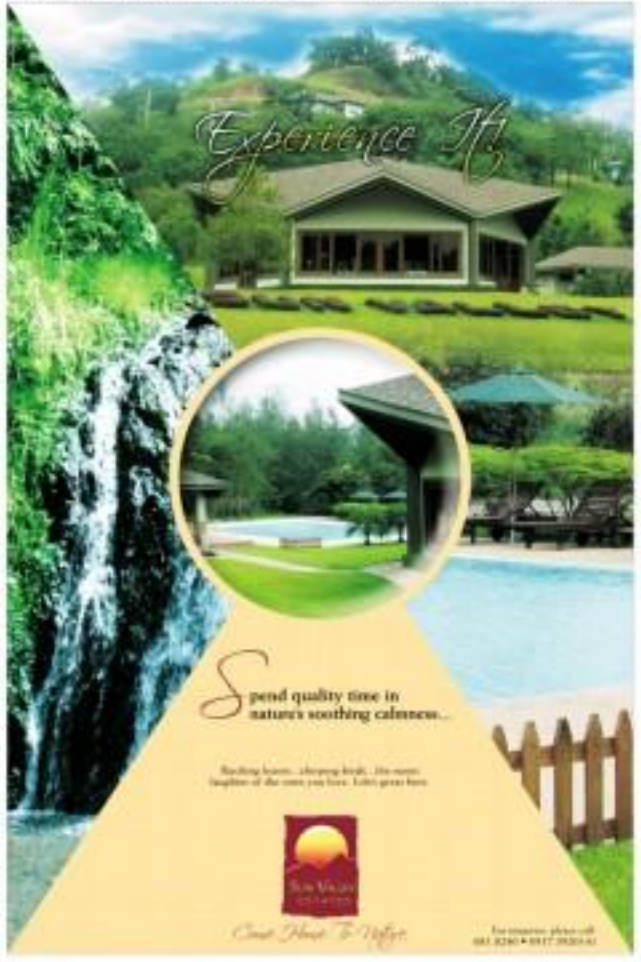
The Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines made this declaration in a press conference yesterday as it renewed its call on the House of Representatives to speed up its proposed conversion of Congress into a Constituent Assembly that would rewrite the 1987 Charter.

At the same time, Ulap said it was embarking on a nationwide campaign to cement popular support for Charter change and raise public awareness of the constitutional amendments needed to overhaul the country's political and economic structures.

"These parallel reform moves have acquired a greater sense of urgency following President Arroyo's declaration that the country is back to normal after last week's lifting of the state of national emergency, and that systematic changes in our political system are now necessary to make sure the economic reforms that had been set in place in her watch would translate into a better life for the overwhelming majority of our people," said Bohol Gov. Erico Aumentado.

Aumentado, who heads both Ulap and the League of Provinces of the Philippines (LPP), was reacting to President Arroyo's declaration in a nationwide radio hook-up Tuesday morning that Charter change should now be put back on senate stage, as concern that political reforms needed to keep the economy's momentum could run short, are put in place at the moment.

"We support this week's unanimous stand by the House leadership that it would push the collection of the 195 signatures needed to convert Congress into Constituent Assembly," Aumentado said. "This is in keeping with our resolution prepared for a multi-partisan initiative to put the spotlight back on Charter change, more so now where the latest political crisis has been resolved quickly enough — thanks to the President's tough call on PP 1017."



17 liable for stampede; criminal charges set

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ized performing their duties under the law."

"We ... deplore the manner by which the NBI has arrested or try to intimidate and incommunicado the people, resembling scenes in a martial law era," he said.

The public information officer of the Pasig government apologized and said an official statement would be issued shortly "[before we] go poststage again," he said.

P1M prize

Thousands of fun, mostly elderly women from poor communities, had stamped out at the Philsports gates close before the event, hoping to get one the first-anniversary draw of "Winnie-ner" and win prizes including P1 million.

In the early morning of Feb. 4, the fans rushed to one of the gates after it became apparent that not everyone would get tickets to the draw.

Security guards shut the gate, and those at the front were crushed to death.

The other officers and employees of ABS-CBN facing charges are Shalimar Almaden, executive producer; Mindy Stewart, executive producer and "Winnie-ner" manager; Harold Cornel Nuera, "Winnie-ner" assistant director; and Jean Owen Garcia, "Winnie-ner" floor director.

Also facing the same charges are Jose Eduardo, Philsports building administrator; Alfredo Seta, Philsports booking and events coordinator; Romulus Vilosta, staff director for operations of Philsports Security and Allied Services Inc.; and Wilfredo Oriental and Ulalio Payanis, Goldlink security in charge.

First person called

Acting Pasig's NBI National Capital Region chief Joel Lasala, Cenzo, who heads ABS-CBN's Entertainment Group, approved the plans for the anniversary show.

"Executive producer Almaden, to her affidavit, said Cenzo was the first person she called when she learned of the stampede," Lasala said in a press conference at the NBI.

Lasala also said Arellano was "instrumental in the invitation" to "Pinoywood" fans to go to the Philippine Arena for the anniversary show, as shown in ABS-CBN video tapes from Jan. 30 to Feb. 3.

Arellano had earlier confirmed previous reports that he visited the site days before the stampede. But he said to his affidavit that he was not able to learn the actual number of people massing within the premises because the areas he visited were "select and limited."

But Lasala said Arellano "should have been able to assess the number of people there and [destroyed from] calling on the fans to proceed to the site on Feb. 4, where an estimated crowd of 17,000 had already gathered."

Lasala also said that based on the statements of witnesses, people had begun to gather in the venue on Jan. 30 and camped outside the Philsports Arena for almost five days.

Emergency meeting

"The people slept, urinated and even defecated in the area, in order to reserve their place in the line," he said, adding:

"The tension was even bright ened when the gates close staff announced that not everyone would be allowed to enter the venue."

Alarmed at the huge amount of people, the "Winnie-ner" personnel held an emergency meeting the night before the stampede, Lasala said, claimed.

"They decided to give out 48 raffle tickets promising P100,000 worth of cash prizes to make the non-winning fans go home. But the plan did not work," he said.

When the gates on Gaps Arena blown open closed at past 6 a.m. after the fans started pushing each other, a stampede ensued, he said.

Lasala recounted a "horrific" incident wherein three still demanded tickets despite the stampede.

NBI-CIDS apparently lacked foresight in preventing the tragedy from happening, Lasala said.

"If you are the event host, you must be responsible for the preparedness," he said. "They should have had a clear exit, comprehensive security plan, which included crowd control and contingency plans."

'Proper authority'

NBI-CIDS said it would submit to any preliminary investigation conducted by the DOJ, which, it pointed out, "should be the proper authority" to conduct such a probe.

"The NBI has endorsed its case is filed, and yet the NBI chose to indge those unfounded recommendations.

"We maintain our confidence in the justice system and will use the NBI [and the DOJ and in the courts."

With a report from Ed Tan

Don't blame GMA for abuses, say President's men

By Armand N. Nocum

IF THERE WERE ABUSES COMmitted by police and the military during the wedding mass of national emergency, President Macapagal-Arroyo could not be blamed for them, Malacañang's legal defenders said.

In separate interviews yesterday, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez and Solicitor General Alfredo Benipayo said there's no way the President could oversee the every implementation of Presidential Proclamation No. 1017.

On Friday, Ms Arroyo lifted for Feb. 24 emergency proclamation, saying a plot is said her by a "tiny half" of extremist groups, disgruntled soldiers, politicians and businessmen had been thwarted.

But civil rights groups questioned the legality of the proclamation and protested alleged abuses of basic rights, pointing to the raid on The Daily Tribune and arrests without warrants.

"You can't blame the President for unlawful application of the law," Benipayo said in reporters in the end of oral arguments on seven petitions assailing the constitutionality of PP 1017 before the Supreme Court yesterday.

Gonzalez said there "could have been violations" of the intent of PP 1017, but he explained that there could be difficulty in enforcing the law to the letter.

"No implementation is perfect," Gonzalez said.

During Tuesday's hearing, Benipayo told the court justices that PP 1017 did not contain a provision authorizing warrantless arrests and searches, raids and confiscations.

In issuing PP 1017, Benipayo asserted that the President merely exercised her constitutional powers as Commander in Chief, calling attention to the existence of a state of national emergency.

If there were violations by the military and police, he said those acts should not be "condoned."

Most of the acting officials appointed by the ruling coalition may independently be made answerable for such unwanted acts, for which the appropriate remedy is given under existing administrative and not penal laws, Benipayo added.

Benipayo asked the high tribunal to compel the petitioners to go after violators of civil liberties in court.

One woman in women's mind on Women's Day

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exactly 6:00 sign yesterday.

"It signals her leadership skills to bring a woman in, I think, as suspension, because she has happened to be a woman, said Soliman, who was wearing a black shirt buttoned with a fancy lavender necklace.

Unprecedented

"Everything that she's been doing is screw up the crime but been what I'd call, to the point of being unprecedented, and I never thought existed in her," Soliman said.

Former Vice President Teofisto Guingona, ever visible to protest actions, was also present at the march.

"I was invited here today because I'm joining the crusade for respect for women, especially since they become leaders and can show that they are just as good as men," said Guingona.

Tagged "Marcha ng Kababaihan," the activity took protesters through Ayala Avenue in both directions, then around Quezon Avenue.

Organizers called it an unprecedented gathering of groups, advocating women's rights from the military to religious sectors, the middle class and the political opposition.

Police estimated the crowd at 3,500, roughly 70 percent of whom were women. Organizers said the gathering peaked at 10,000.

Members of militant umbrella organization Lakas ng Mamamayan) Bayan, which brought a large contingent through the women's alliance Gabriela, marched down the same roads in Makati's Central Business District in 3 p.m. yesterday.

Supporters of Ms Arroyo's opposition in the May 2004 elections also crowned late Ayala Executive the National Coordinating Council for Volunteers, which supported the late actor and opposition standard-bearer Fernando Poe Jr., and Kanlaon Women, an organization under Bangon Pilipinas campaign for Sen. Eddie Villanueva, also a presidential candidate.

The Black and White Movement, a middle-forces organization born at the height of the anti-Erap protests last year, also joined the activity.

Red Rags marched a sea of purple and pink banners battered by persistent chanting "Never Again! Never Again! Never Again to Martial Law!" and "Signs ng Kababaihan, Gloria Resign!"

At 5 p.m., a program of speeches and songs began on a concert stage set up parked in front of the Ninoy Aquino Monument.

Antiriot cops

Police were on standby throughout the activity, with more than 100 antiriot cops at the ready.

The Makati Police Department (MPD) said City Hall had granted a permit for the activity until 7 p.m. The protesters dispersed peacefully at 7:15 p.m.

MPD chief Senior Supt. Marinio Ibrio Jr. boasted that the activity which was supposed to be a "show of force" was, in fact, carried out to be like any other one in Ayala proper.

He said organizers had promised not to carry banners with antiadministration messages but the protesters took them, said to bring huge streamers bearing the words "Dear Gloria"

Antiriot cops mar women's rally, arrest Rep. Risa Baraquel

To page A2

tary immunity against the Quezon City police for arresting her.

Blocked by cops

Earlier in the day, Baraquel, Bican and hundreds of other women marched from Mendiola Bridge at the boundary between Quezon City and Manila, intending to march on Mendiola for a protest rally. But they were blocked by a phalanx of policemen.

Undeterred, the women of the left and militant groups, among other groups, held a program at the intersection rousing women's issues and denouncing the Arroyo regime.

After an hour-long negotiation, Sen. Diego gave them five minutes to disperse. But the women stood their ground—until the policemen started shoving them using shields and batons.

Some of the women and their male colleagues scattered and ran away; some fought back by throwing rocks, prompting the cops to give chase.

At around 11:40 a.m., policemen and women cited in escort thumped toward a police van.

She resisted, telling them not to touch her and yelling at the cops not to hurt the demonstrators.

Insult

Joan Enriquez of the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women-Asia Pacific said the dispersal was an "insult" to the women who had no plan of violence in staging the protest action.

"The violence came from them

and," she said, referring to the police.

San Diego justified the dispersal, saying it was necessary to restore order along España Extension, which had been closed to traffic during the women's program.

He said the police had allowed the group to hold their program until 11:30 a.m. as shown extended that deadline by 10 minutes, then five minutes more, before proceeding with the dispersal.

"I thought PP 1017 has been lifted," Baraquel, visibly frustrated after her release from police custody. "But [it] seems it's still in force."

Asked how demanding the President's ouster, the women raised specific issues such as violence against women, child pornography and the Subic rape case, among other things.

In the Visayas

Anti-Arroyo rallies were also held in key cities in the Visayas in commemoration of International Women's Day.

Bandied Bishop Dinualdo Gutierrez, wearing a black armband like most of his priests, led about 8,000 Negrenses in a march to the city's public plaza to say "never again" to martial law and PP 1017.

The bishop said the black armbands stood for the death of human rights, of the liberal and free space for people to speak out and air their grievances, and, in a sense, of democracy.

"If truth liberates, then all falsehoods confine. A nation that is fed and fattens on lies, halftruths and double talk is not truly free. It is under the shackles of the Father of lies," Navarra said in a pastoral letter he read during the rally.

In Iloilo, Bikas and Gabriela protesters were ushered by the women's rather statement that she might again use emergency powers.

Around 1,500 protesters led by the militant women's group Gabriela and the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan assembled in front of the University of the Philippines in the Visayas campus in Iloilo City before marching to the Iloilo Rotary Park, platform where they held a program and a mini-concert.

Among those who spoke were Aurelio Bengan and the rally was also a "return march" for the 8th of PP 1017.

"The determined opposition and defiance of the people against her turnout of mis-focused her on EO the order that we will remain vigilant and vow to fight back if the suppression of our civil rights continues," said Bengan.

With reports from Gayle C. Gomez, Artur Burgos Jr. and Joey Gabieta, PDI Visayas Bureau

GMA invocation of God angers religious leaders

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pleas leaders.

Bro. Eddie Villanueva, head of the 2-million-strong Jesus Is Lord Movement and Bangon Pilipinas, cautioned Ms Arroyo against using God's name "in vain."

"How can cheating or the manipulation of election results, the unabated graft and corruption in the government, the suppression of civil and political rights ... be one part of God's plan or desire?" the evangelist said in an e-mail to the inquirer.

In a 30-minute interview on dzBB radio on Tuesday, the President said she believed that God had willed for being the country's leader.

"I believe that I am here now because that is the plan of God for me and so he," she said.

Ms Arroyo has been bounded by the religious right since the May 2004 presidential election. The charges stemmed from revelations in wiretapped conversations during the balloting purportedly between her and Senior Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano.

Opposition lawmakers have announced plans to revive impeachment proceedings against Ms Arroyo. Last year, her majority allies in the House killed the process on a technicality. Pilipinas a chance to solve his boss rolled over Arroyo's legitimacy problem.

'Back to Hello, Garci'

Lipa Archbishop Ramon Arguelles expressed doubt that God will want to get involved in Philippine politics.

"If the President says so, the better for God God," Arguelles said. "When she claims in a very serious responsibility, she can prove that God is behind her and believe like someone close to God."

If indeed she were chosen by God, Ms Arroyo should steer the country toward observing God's commandments, particularly against stealing and "bearing false witness, the prelate said.

"Whether she is God's choice for this time or not, she, as well as all Filipinos who believe in God, should have a change of heart and promote God's love dialogue for the people, especially the poor," Arguelles said.

Bacolod Bishop Leonardo Medroso said anybody could claim the hand of God but "whether it's true or not based on reality is always the question."

Medroso said he urged the administration to heed the advice of the Catholic bishops' pastoral letter calling for a relentless search for the truth behind the "Hello Garci" controversy.

Filipinos want GMA out

Villanueva said many Filipinos would not be asking for Ms Arroyo's resignation if she had been placed in Malacañang by no less than God.

"They want that 80 percent have already expressed dissatisfaction over her government [the] majority want her to step down," he said.

"She is illegitimate not only in the eyes of the majority of the Filipinos but even in the eyes of God," said Villanueva, who lost to the 2004 presidential election.

He said measures such as the wedding inspection of a state of national emergency, the turning of officials from appearing in congressional hearings and the "talk... to and preemptive response" is changing done to promote "clean by deeds not some born God."

"It is not God's will that the rights of His people are quelled," Villanueva said.

"It is not the will of God to support a leader who perpetrates corruption, who promotes political brutality through CPR or suppresses truth in investigations through EO 464."

'God's will'

In his weekly press briefing, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita conceded Ms Arroyo's assertion that God was on her side.

"Nobody can go against God's will, I tell you, but even, oh my gosh, the religious, the men of the cloth," said Ermita. "In the end, that is God's will that will prevail."

When pressed if he meant that the public should just accept their lot, he replied: "It's God's will. It's God's will."

"Everything that we are in this universe is God's will. When you are stricken, when we are, that is God's will. All we know is that if we believe in God, we know that God has favoured us to be somebody, to be someone," said Ermita.

This view, he claimed, was also shared by Muslims. Quoting a message from a Libyan ambassador, Ermita said: "Whatever Allah says, he merely says 'Be' and it will happen."

'Testing God's will'

Asked if those invoking the President's stance should be considered as testing God's will, Ermita replied: "Not necessarily."

He ignored a question whether Ms Arroyo was willing to put God's will to a test by agreeing to a snap election being called by the opposition.

Correction

IN THE MARCH 3 ISSUE, a 7nh of the Town article on Page A14, "Tangle Experts"—mistyped the number of Texas Rangers who raided the Mahal Pulis Tawon during the 1989 coup attempt against the Aquino administration. According to the 1990 Final Report of the Davide Fact-Finding Commission, the 3000 Rangers numbered 300—not 3,000.

The article also misnamed the ranks of two rebel officers who figured in the coup attempt. According to the Davide report, Lieutenant Lim was then a captain—not a colonel. Abraham Purugganan was then a major—not a retired Army colonel.

The article also misnamed the names of the leaders of the mercenary Naval Rangers in the wiretaps on the Mahal Commercial Grounds. According to the Davide report, the Sister Rangers were led by Generals Lt. Col. Rafael Galvez—not Pinangpaan.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors involving in the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue Extension, Makati City, fax line 897-8710 loc. 341 or e-mail corrections@philippinedailyinquirer.net.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to Letters Editor Yvel, readers' advocate, e-mail address readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph, or fax line 897-47 00/904, attn: Readers Advocate. Still please mention it 897-0618 Local 242.

LPG shows poverty now wears a woman's face

From page A1

cooked over charcoal.

The finding has been validated by an increase in demand for clay stove burners in Metro Manila, she said. Other homemakers in middle- and low-income households have started using wood and kerosene.

Guan said that for women LPG was the most relevant indication that the political crisis was the result of the actual economic condition and not due to the political opposition.

The LPG Industry Association of the Philippines confirms that LPG sales have gone down since last year.

"It started in May 2005 due to the continued price increase," said Mercedita Pimentel, executive director of the LPG Industry association.

LPG prices, which hit the P500 level in mid-November last year, rose to P532 per 11-kg cylinder in Metro Manila at the beginning of March this year.

Currently, LPG is sold at P499 to P540 per 11-kg cylinder, an increase of more than 100 percent from its price in the same period in 2002.

LPG sales drop

"We really felt the drop. Nowadays, LPG can sell for as high as P560. We're living in tough times," said Bernardo Bolinay, president of the LPG Refiller Association of the Philippines.

Bolinay noted a drop in sales, which he said started in November 2005 with the imposition of the 10-percent expanded value-added tax. The VAT rate was raised to 12 percent last month.

In San Fernando, Pampanga, Best Gas Refilling Plant saw a 30-percent drop in sales in February compared to the sales of the same month last year, Bolinay said.

ADJUSTING the prices inside a store in Pasig, Manila, does not make it any less expensive to the marginalized. Oil firms rolled back their LPG prices by a meager 50 centavos last week. AFP PHOTO

10-percent decline nationwide

Nationwide, the drop in LPG sales was about 10 percent, but the decline was greater in the Visayas and Mindanao, where alternative sources of energy abound, according to Bautista.

She said consumers in Luzon may also have resorted to using kerosene or even charcoal.

One can cook meals for the day with just P10 to P20 worth of kerosene.

"But if we compare that, spending P20 a day will amount to P600 a month, a refill of an 11-kg. LPG container) P500, " Pimentel said.

Because of the high cost of 11-kg LPG tanks, the Department of Energy is encouraging suppliers to offer cooking gas in cans with capacities of as little as 1 kg. The small tanks will cost as a little more than P50.

Bolinay noted that people were resorting to charcoal, firewood or even coconut husk.

Poor's reduced purchasing power

Prices of basic goods and services rose by an average of 7.6 percent in February, the highest in eight months.

Guan said President Macapagal-Arroyo's statement about a rising poor standard like reductions in the people's purchasing power from 70.2 percent in January 2005 to 74.2 percent in January.

Guan said Ms Arroyo "has been remiss" about the poor's savings and the growth in portfolio investments.

But both indicators only heavily on the health of the overseas Filipino worker, Guan said. Remittances by overseas Filipino workers rose to $16.7 billion in 2005.

She said portfolio investments were not a reliable economic barometer because they do not directly result in new jobs as they are not injected into local industries.

Those investments, according to Guan, are immediately withdrawn at the slightest hint of instability.

Customs men who helped Lee sacked

By Leila B. Salaverria

CUSTOMS COMMISSIONER Napoleon Morales yesterday ordered the relief of all Bureau of Customs personnel involved in facilitating the release of a plastic resin shipment that surprised smugglers Samuel Lee allegedly ordered Customs personnel to escort a loaded warehouse to a private compound.

Morales said he directed Port of Manila Collector Horacio Suansing to determine who among the port's examiners and appraisers were involved in releasing the plastic resin shipment that was apparently misdeclared as packaging material.

"Even for circumstances where are responsible for the release, I asked collector Suansing to relieve them and give them 72 hours to explain why they should not be sanctioned," he said in a phone interview. "We will spare no one."

He added that he expected to learn the identities of the relieved personnel soon, most likely tomorrow.

The customs commissioner also said he ordered the relief of the personnel because they would be subjected to an investigation.

"I also want to follow due process," he added.

Samuel Lee released after posting P360,000 bail

Front page A1

Benjamin de los Santos said last night.

De los Santos is the chief of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group-Criminal Investigation and Detection Division, which arrested Lee on Sunday at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport upon his return from Hong Kong.

Lee was arrested for allegedly ordering the diversion of a shipment of plastic resin from a container bonded warehouse to a compound in Bulacan on Dec. 9.

The Department of Justice recommended earlier yesterday that Lee, who was brought in the department for inquest on Tuesday, be slapped with three counts of smuggling.

Lee was among the suspected smugglers named in a recent Inquirer Sunday, along with Hoky Teh and Lucio Lan Co, who are purportedly close to the Pine Correctionals.

Lee is considered "untouchable and well-connected" in the Bureau of Customs, according to the police, quoting sources in the bureau's intelligence units.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said Lee was not "untouchable," asserting that there will be no whitewash in the conduct of preliminary investigation.

The inquest team, however, recommended that the charges against Lee's alleged cohorts be reduced for preliminary investigation as they have been in large during the inquest.

CAUGHT: Sammy Lee, allegedly the country's most notorious smuggler, is on his way to (Camp Crame on Monday. Lee's 62 container vans allegedly filled with plastic resin were held by customs

Change of heart

In Quezon City, the Prosecutor's Office yesterday appeared to have had a change of heart and amended its earlier resolution recommending the release of Lee.

Instead of direct bribery, the Prosecutor's Office recommended the filing of the charge of corrupting a public official against Lee.

The prosecutor's recommendation came as Lee cleared an earlier case in the QCIC, which charged Lee with bribery.

The recommendation prompted Gonzalez to order the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office to explain its decision, which police officials find "highly questionable."

It was Assistant City Prosecutor Ma. Cristin Cadiz-Canacheong who recommended Lee's release because, according to her, there was "no valid case" for Lee's arrest.

CIDG operatives insist that arrest was valid because it was made while the 41-year-old Lee was allegedly trying to hand over P500,000 to the head of the arresting team, Insp. Wilfredo Antiporda, on Sunday.

Amended resolution

De los Santos said the amended resolution showed that there was a case against Lee for his failure to file a police affidavit.

"They reversed themselves. They recommended the filing of [Lee's] subpoena [and] affidavits in court," De los Santos said.

"Wherefore it is respectfully recommended that a case for corruption of a public official be filed in court instead against the herein respondent Atty. Samuel Lee," the new resolution signed by Canacheong.

Lee's camp immediately posted bail for the corruption charge. His lawyers also posted a surety bond for an estafa case he was facing in Manila. The bail for the estafa charge was set at P360,000.

The CIDG has charged Lee with violating the Tariff and Customs Code for allegedly diverting three container vans full of plastic resin from the Bureau of Customs.

"Through a dummy corporation, Licensee Enterprises Inc., managed by Rosilina Alabado, suspect Lee imported raw materials, high density polyethylene resins from Singapore and filled its import entry through misdeclaration [of the resins] as raw materials and grossly undervalued the shipments in three consignees," a police report had said.

Missing documents

In his amended resolution, Canacheong appeared the points raised by De los Santos when he protested against the recommendation by the prosecutor to release Lee.

Gaudiang said two documents were missing when police investigators found the bribery charge against Lee on March 5 — the affidavit of arrest and the affidavit of complaint against Lee for violation of the country's laws on bribe and customs, "which would prove that there is a case against [Lee] for which he offered the money in order to get your free."

"It is mind boggling, if not totally incredible, that a person who was allegedly arrested and detained on the morning of March 5, 2006 would readily have available to him the documents only on the afternoon of the same day and approached a police officer seated at his table and offered [a] yellow plastic bag containing P999,000," the assistant prosecutor said.

"With these in mind and not because she was influenced by anybody, the undersigned prosecutor deemed it necessary that the case be for further investigation on account of the newly discovered circumstances," she said.

The police said one final "mind-boggling" Lee's ability to produce P500,000 while under detention.

He was not locked up in a cell but detained in a police office. He was not handcuffed and had access to his cellphone, the police said.

The police, however, were glad that Gaudiang had amended her first resolution.

"Despite constant reminders and we are given opportunity to correct, we believe in the spirit of accordance administration of justice, we always seek mutual cooperation with the other pillars of the judiciary," De los Santos said.

Singapore rewards 2 Filipinas with cash

From page A1

for 28 years for the family of his stepparents Lolo Leo Ilano. He was cited "for looking after and caring for two sick members of the family with also attending to household work."

Garcia has been employed by the family of Mae Bong for six years. She has looked after Hong Hong's young son who has a motor-planning speech disorder.

Cited for "caring for the language course 'to better understand her ward and help out in his therapy," the DFA reported.

Some 150,000 workers work as domestic in Singapore, mainly from Indonesia, the Philippines and Sri Lanka. Filipino domestic helpers include well-schooled women—former professionals, teachers, health workers, office employees and college graduates—often considered to have an advantage over other female workers from nonEnglish-speaking countries because of their fluency in English.

Gov't-sponsored

The government-sponsored awards were given on Feb. 23 on the occasion of Singapore's National Foreign Workers Day 2006 spokesperson Gilbert Aseque said, quoting a report from the Philippine Embassy in Singapore.

The Filipina winners were chosen from over 500 nominations received by the organizers. A total of 12 awards were handed out during the celebration, the DFA said.

Top Singapore employers

Among the winners up for the employers of the "Ate" award were Dey Ibane Gan, a Singaporean who has hired a Filipina, Iriemarico Montales, as maid in his household for the past 28 years.

Philippine Ambassador to Singapore Robert Ferrer presented Gan Quinchon and Garcia, saying "their winning only showed the Filipinos' commitment to their respective jobs."

In 1995, Singapore refused to heed the Philippine government's appeals to stay the execution of Constantipolcan, sparking street protests in Manila and ensuring diplomatic ties between the two neighbors.

A Singaporean court convicted Constantipolcan, 42, of killing another Filipina maid, Flor Contemplacion, leaving a 4-year-old Singaporean boy—crimes that she was denied stand denied until her death.

And Singapore sentiments against her received in September last year when Singaporean authorities arrested and charged another Filipina maid, Gina Aquilar, 20, with the gruesome murder of another Filipina maid, Jane Le Pardela, 26.

'Superman's' widow dies of lung cancer; 44

From page A1

around the world—her death seemed sudden. In recently as Jan. 12, she looked healthy and happy as she helped set up Camille Binay's "Oscar and Reynel" at a packed Madison Square Garden during a ceremony honoring hockey star Mark Messier, a friend.

"Unfortunately, that's what happens with this aerial disease," said Maggie Tobias of the Christopher Reeve Foundation, where Dana had succeeded her husband as chair. "You feel good, you're responding and then the disease rears."

Dana died Monday night at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Medical Center in Manhattan, said Reeve's cousin-publicist Kathy Leuzi.

Officials would not disclose Dana's treatment or say where she entered the hospital. But Leuzi said she visited her there on Friday, when Dana was "tired but with her usual spirit." Reeve's wife, Dana, was also by her bedside, always trying to make others people feel good, her characteristic personality."

Loving spirit

"The brightest light has gone out," comedian Robin Williams, "but will forever celebrate her loving spirit."

Former President Bill Clinton and Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton described Dana as "a model of tenacity and love."

"Despite the adversity that she faced, Dana bravely met those challenges and was always seen as cheerful, devoted wife, mother and advocate," the Clintons said.

Christopher and Dana married in 1992. Life changed dramatically for the young show business couple three years later when Christopher suffered near total paralysis in a horse riding accident and almost died.

In his autobiography, "Still Me," Christopher wrote that he suggested early on in his wife, "Maybe we should let me go." She responded, "I'll be with you for the long haul, no matter what. You're still you and I love you."

Those were "the words that saved my life," Christopher said.

Caregiving for 9 years

For Christopher's remaining nine years, Dana became her husband's constant companion and supporter during the outbreak of his rehabilitation, winning world-wide acclaim and admiration. With her husband, she became an activist in the search for a cure for spinal cord injuries.

"Something miraculous and wonderful happened amidst incredible tragedy, as the whole nation witnessed her life begin to emerge," Dana wrote in "Nine Lives: Stories of Courage and Inspiration." Letters to Christopher Reeve from Teenagers and Other Friends."

Return to acting

"When we had yes to discovery were all the gifts that came out of shutting hardship, the hidden pleasures behind the pain," she said.

After her husband's death, Dana returned to acting, appearing in the movie "Deck the Halls" and the television series "Ally McBeal" and "Will & Grace."

She also planned to return to acting. She had appeared in Broadway off-Broadway and regional stages and on the TV shows "Law & Order," "NY," and "All My Children" and she'd had to give up a demanding role when she was widowed.

"I am an actress and I do love to make acting," Dana said.

However, her mother died of complications from emphysema and Dana's own diagnosis came the next summer, two days after the lung cancer death of ABC News anchor Peter Jennings, a smoker.

"I thought less after everything that she had gone through with Christ but she would have time to enroll the flowers and be in the sun," said Sen. Diane Feinstein. "But apparently that was not meant to be."

From the start, Dana, a nonsmoker, expressed confidence she would beat lung cancer, and her memoir, to be released in June, is set to go in a fundraising gala for the foundation. Dana provided staff whistles from Williams and said she was responding well to treatment.

"I'm doing everything and daily feeling every minute the doctors can throw at me," Dana said. "Skipping rope looks better all the time."

Human touch

In about the same time, Dana signed a PAU show, "The Hero Medicine," about how doctors are paying more attention to a patient's cultural values and lifestyle as part of treatment. In her segment for the program, she said: "I do love hearing about the human touch in how better doctors can be that high-tech medicine, with all its wonders, often leaves out that all-important human touch."

PBS on Tuesday said that the show would be broadcast as scheduled on March 29.

Dana is survived by her Reeve, 13-year-old son, PBS; two grown stepchildren, Matthew and Alexandra; her father, Charles Morosini; and two sisters.

Goldberg said Will was "in the loving care of family and friends" and that his mother had arranged for his future.

The funeralists said no plans for Dana's funeral had been announced. AP

The WORLD

Editor Lorenzo B. Gueco

Nearly 100 firms linked to Thaksin facing boycott

BANGKOK—THAI PROTESTERS THREATENED WEDNESDAY TO boycott nearly 100 companies and products linked to Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, ratcheting up the pressure for him to resign.

The boycott list includes several top international brands, such as Tesco, Heineken, Smirnoff and Seven Eleven convenience stores.

"We will use it to stop Thai people don't drink Smirnoff vodka or buy goods at Seven Eleven convenience stores," said Pitsithep Pitsuwongsuwan, a spokesperson for the anti-Thaksin coalition that has led weekly protests in Bangkok.

The list includes dozens of companies with links to Thaksin's business empire and to his party.

The boycott would begin Thursday if the Singapore investment firm Temasek completes its purchase of Ahn Corp., the telecom giant founded by Thaksin, Pitsithep said.

Thaksin's family sold its stake in Shin to Temasek stake in Shin Corp. to Temasek in late January, marking $1.9 billion in the tax-free deal. Public anger at the deal marshalled into weekly protests and plunged Thailand into political turmoil.

"A boycott is the general right of the Thai public to protest against Shin Corp.'s sale to Temasek," Pitsithep said.

The People's Alliance for Democracy released a list of nearly 100 boycott targets, including Thailand's largest mobile phone operator, three international airlines and two banks.

Among Shin Corp.'s companies are Thailand's biggest mobile phone operator Advance Info Service (AIS), domestic carrier Air Asia, internet provider CS Loxinfo and ITV television station.

Temasek's control increase include banks OBS, Thai Osma Bank and OSK-DMG Bank Calyon franchise, Tiger Beer and Heineken, as well as Singapore and Carlsay Pacific airlines.

Billionaire Thaksin counts many top businessmen among his party's members and supporters, including people with ties to Toyota, Suzuki and Seven-Eleven—putting all those firms on the protesters' list as well.

The latest pressure from the protesters came as they ready for their most major rally Monday night, to be followed early Tuesday by a march on Government House during Thaksin's Cabinet meeting.

The protesters got a major boost this week when the nation's biggest union vowed to mobilize 100,000 workers to join them.

Thirteen supporting Thailand's 41 state enterprises are set to meet Thursday on whether to join the protest, but divisions have begun to emerge among the workers.

A delegation of railway workers delivered a statement to Thaksin's office, saying they wanted to remain neutral in the political crisis.

"The union members want to explain that we are not all involved with those calling for a strike and joining the protest to oust the government," the statement said.

Adding to the pressure on Thaksin, the army chief warned Wednesday that the ongoing political upheaval could unsettle several King Bhumibol Adulyadej.

"The king may be upset because he knows that we are having these problems in the country," Gen. Sonthi Boonyaratglin said. /AFP

India blasts kill 21, injure 62

LUCKNOW, INDIA— Three separate bomb blasts ripped through the holy Hindu city of Varanasi in India on Tuesday, killing at least 21 people and wounding 62 at a crowded temple and railway station.

Police also found two other bombs near the city's main crematorium site on the banks of the Ganges River, officials said. There were no immediate claims of responsibility for the attacks.

The authorities put states across India on high alert, fearing the attacks in Hinduism's holiest city could spark communal violence.

The first blast exploded outside the Sankatmon Hanuman temple—one of the oldest in the holiest Hindu site in the western city—when it was packed with hundreds carrying out their weekly Tuesday night worship.

Witnesses said the powerful explosion was off a panicked crush as people scrambled for safety.

"The blast was so powerful that it could be heard across the town, and we have moved five or six badly burned dead," an eyewitness said.

"Everyone was running. There were corpses lying around," another witness said. An unexploded bomb was also found in the temple premises.

Nurses worked to treat the victims, most of whom had injuries on their legs and on the lower parts of their bodies, people on the scene said.

Within 30 minutes, two more bombs went off in the city's main railway station, said Ramesh Pathak, the city's deputy administration. /AFP

Palestine PM not immune from assassination – Israel

JERUSALEM—ISRAELI DEFENSE MINISTER Shaul Mofaz warned Tuesday that Hamas Palestinian prime minister-designate Ismail Haniya would not be immune from assassination if the radical Islamists carried out attacks.

"From the moment when Hamas continues on the path of terrorism, nobody in the international community benefits from immunity," Mofaz said when asked on army radio about the possibility of Haniya being subject to a targeted killing operation.

Haniya has been tasked by Palestinian leader Mahmud Abbas to form a government following Hamas' massive victory in a Jan. 25 general election.

Hamas has carried out dozens of anti-Israeli suicide attacks during the course of a five-year Palestinian uprising although none in the past 12 months.

Haniya reacted to Mofaz's comments by accusing Israel of conducting "state terrorism." "Hamas does not fear these threats and blackmail. We are committed to the defense of our rights and our people whatever the price," spokesperson Sami Abu Zuhri told AFP.

"These comments by the Israeli defense minister are an illustration of state terrorism."

Two Hamas leaders, Sheikh Ahmad Yasin and Abdelaziz al-Rantisi, were killed in Israeli air strikes two years ago. Haniya was also present with Yasin during an earlier assassination attempt in September 2003.

More recently, Israel has targeted leaders of the extremist Islamic Jihad movement which has continued to carry out attacks, including seven suicide bombings in the past year.

Two members of Jihad died in an air strike on Gaza City on Monday but three children were also killed in the attack, which prompted stinging international criticism from the United Nations.

Mofaz vowed that the so-called targeted killing operations would continue. "This policy is just and it will be pursued," he said, adding that the strikes were carried out with "surgical precision."

Questioned specifically about the deaths of an eight-year-old and two 12-year-old boys in Monday's strike, Mofaz said he was "sorry when children get hit."

"But if I can't use all the advantages and disadvantages [of targeted killings], you can see that when we acted against Hamas, the situation changed. He [is] to work with Abad, we need a little bit of patience," he added.

The commander of Israel's air force, Eliezer Shkedy said his forces made every effort not to hurt civilians but that in war it was not always possible.

"We are making expeditious efforts not to hurt those who are not involved in terrorism but we do not succeed every time. It's war," he told army radio.

The 150 Middle East peace envoy, Moses Amirav, accused Mofaz of "playing with fire" and "every judicial killings," for reasons which include the danger they pose to innocent bystanders.

"While recognizing Israel's right to defend itself, particularly from suicide attacks, I call on the Israeli military authorities to desist from extrajudicial killings and their assassination mission at all times," Amirav said in a statement.

Mofaz's comments came amid the countdown to an Israeli general election on March 28, with the ruling Kadima party keen to deflect any suggestion they are "soft on terrorism."

Benjamin Netanyahu, leader of the right-wing opposition Likud party, has claimed Hamas's victory was a direct result of the government's decision to pull troops and settlers out of the Islamists' Gaza Strip stronghold last year. AFP

New high-tech gizmos showcased at world fair

BERLIN—THE WORLD'S BIGgest high-tech fair opens this week, showcasing the latest in robotics, computers and consumer electronics as more than 200,000 visitors flock to the Messe Berlin fairgrounds.

The CeBIT running March 9-15 in the northern German city of Hanover said last year that 6,200 exhibitors from 71 countries and some 674,000 visitors eager to take in new advances in digital and information technology.

Among the most hotly awaited trends are new applications for Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology, which is slated to wipe the traditional bar code off the map.

Developers are hundreds of uses for the tiny antennae planted in chips the size of a postage stamp.

Shoppers in the future will be able to pull their carts up to the supermarket scanner and with one "beep!" have all the products registered and billed in an instant.

Bookworms will be able to browse through a standing bookstand, with a chip in each volume skip long check-out lines at the library.

And patients will eventually be able to have RFID chips implanted in their bodies, allowing their personal physician to call up his or her personal health history at the touch of a button.

Germany's renowned Fraunhofer Institute and the neurology clinic in Berlin's Charite hospital are to unveil a system to support people with allow people incapacitated by injury or disease to communicate.

Using 128 electrodes harvested to the cranium, the invention literally reads minds as the patient uses his thoughts to type out typed messages.

And the event would not be complete without a few rather gimmicky get-whiz inventions including "intelligent" vacuum cleaners and lawn mowers that take care of household chores and return themselves to the charging station.

"The CeBIT is focusing on RFID this year because in the future, all processing for example in the field of logistics, will be changed fundamentally," said Ernst Raue of the event's organizing team. AFP

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

RE-BIDDING FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF ONE (1) LOT

LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Title No.	Item / Description	Approved Budget	Source of Funds
2006-005	50 units Automated Teller Machines PLUS Five (5) Year Maintenance Package	P 25,000,000.00 P 25,000,000.00	LBP Funds
2006-006	1,000 bds. Laser/Ink Stamped Passbook (Size: 21.5 cm. x 14 cm.) 6,000 bds. Laser/Ink Stamped Signature Card (Size: 8 cm. x 10 cm.) 1,500 pcs. Credit/Debit Ayala "I-ID" s.7" 5,000 bds. Plastic Jacket for ATM Card (Green, Glossy) 100mic	P 214,000.00 1,680,000.00 13,500.00 600,000.00 P 2,507,500.00	LBP Funds
2006-002	12 units Multimedia Projector	P 2,184,000.00	LBP Funds

LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

US lawmaker to block Dubai ports deal

WASHINGTON—DEFYING PRESIDENT George W. Bush, Republicans in the House of Representatives on Tuesday moved to block a state-owned Arab company to manage six US ports by attaching an amendment to must-pass spending legislation for the Iraq war and hurricane relief.

Some Republican leaders backed a plan by Appropriations Committee Chair Jerry Lewis to push a separate bill aimed at stopping the Dubai ports deal the administration had approved, said Nan Hayworth, spokesperson for House Speaker Dennis Hastert, an Illinois Republican.

"We do not believe the US should allow state-owned companies to run American ports," Hayworth said. Lewis had rejected the port security legislation earlier in the day, saying it would not receive consideration in the Senate. But he added, "It is my intention to lay the foundation to block the deal." The House Appropriations Committee is expected to debate the ports amendment on Wednesday.

Lewis, a California Republican, said the amendment to the emergency spending bill for the Iraq war and Hurricane Katrina relief would not mandate that only American citizens be involved in running US ports. He said "the language is designed to deal specifically with the concerns that flow around the United Emirates question," but he also said the measure "could be interpreted to be broader than just a single country."

Bush has threatened to veto legislation that attempts to block the $6.45 billion deal under which Dubai Ports World took over the global assets of Britain-based P&O—which would give the state-owned Arab company control over managing some facilities at six major US ports. Reuters

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

SAND PROTEST

A Tibetan monk from Sella works on a mandala of colored sands in the Prague Museum, March 7. The crumbs will thrown this mandala into the Vltava River today to support the Free Tibet movement. —AP

US fears sectarian civil war in Iraq

BAGHDAD — THE UNITED STATES CONCEDED on Tuesday that Iraq could yet descend into sectarian civil war as US diplomats moved to break a deadlock among Iraqi political leaders that threatens further delay in opening a parliament.

"We have opened the floodgates to fear," US ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad said, referring to the US-led invasion of Iraq.

"The question is, what is the way forward?" he added, speaking two weeks after the bombing of a major Shiite Muslim shrine in Samarra sparked a three-day bloodshed that killed hundreds.

"If another incident (occurs), Iraq is really vulnerable," the envoy, who is at the heart of talks to forge a coalition of Shiites, Sunnis and Kurds, told the Los Angeles Times. "The way forward ... is no effort to build bridges across communities."

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, as architect of the 2003 invasion, said: "There always have a potential for a civil war." He blamed the media for "exaggerating" Iraq's problems.

"It was held together through force and vicious repression," he said of the minority Sunni dictatorial rule of Saddam Hussein.

President George W. Bush says an inclusive Iraqi government can bring stability and, along with the formation of Iraq's new armed forces, can allow him to start withdrawing US troops.

The recent violence has jeopardized that plan.

A few days before US military commanders are expected to put recommendations to Bush for future troop levels, Khalilzad warned that pulling out too soon would risk a regional conflict that would make his native Afghanistan "look like child's play."

The assassination of the top Iraqi general in Baghdad on Monday by a sniper who apparently knew exactly which car door he would open as a 14-vehicle convoy prompted an investigation.

Iraqi generals said it proved the US-trained army was infiltrated by militants who could turn on fellow soldiers in the event of a conflict with sectarian and ethnic militias.

Efforts to forge a grand coalition following an election in December that Washington hailed as a triumph of democracy have stumbled over Sunni and Shiite refusal to accept that Shiite Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari should stay on.

His critics say he's failed to bring security or prosperity during the year in which he has served as interim premier.

Jaafari, in turn, appeared intimidated on Tuesday. The soft-spoken Islamist downs told an hour-long media briefing that finalized only briefly on Iraq's political crisis that the issue was being discussed in a "civilized and democratic way."

Angered by the opposition but climbed over its response, the various parties in the Shiites' ruled United Iraqi Alliance (UIA) Tuesday for a few days to Sunday's planned opening of parliament.

But senior officials, including the outgoing speaker, said that was unlikely because March 15 is a constitutional deadline.

Sunday's session, however, may conduct essentially no business — not even the election of a new speaker demanded by the Sunni Arabs.

UN employees protest Annan's overhaul plan

UNITED NATIONS — UN SECRETARY GENERAL Kofi Annan outlined on Tuesday a radical overhaul of UN procedures, recruitment and training, prompting protests by staff on proposed outsourcing from New York headquarters.

In a long-awaited report on management reforms, Annan sought more financial oversight, simplified hiring and reporting procedures, staff buyouts and a modern information system. The cost is estimated at $500 million.

Annan said the shake-up was necessary because the United Nations had to cope with 60,000 peacekeepers and civilian staff in the field and its "regulations and rules do not respond to current needs." The report is a direct result of scandals in the oil-for-food program in Iraq and fraud in awarding contracts.

Now in this building, after 50 years of ad hoc repair and maintenance, now needs to be fully rehabilitated from top to bottom, as our organization, after decades of piecemeal reform, now needs a thorough strategic refit," Annan told the 191-member General Assembly in introducing the 23-page report.

The exercise, demanded by world leaders at a UN summit in September, would cost about $510 million; $200 million for improving staff conditions in the field; $120 million for information technology; $10 million for training and a possible $100 million for buyouts.

In turn, UN officials believe they could save nearly as much through streamlining contract procurement and farming out projects, but gave few details.

While UN diplomats were unanimous their first response, UN staff met in a raucous session with Annan asking for accountability for previous failed reforms.

Rosemary Waters, the American head of UN staff committee, said 700 employees would participate "to halt the strenuous effort of the management to override the rights and benefits of staff" and management's attempts to outsource jobs. Reuters

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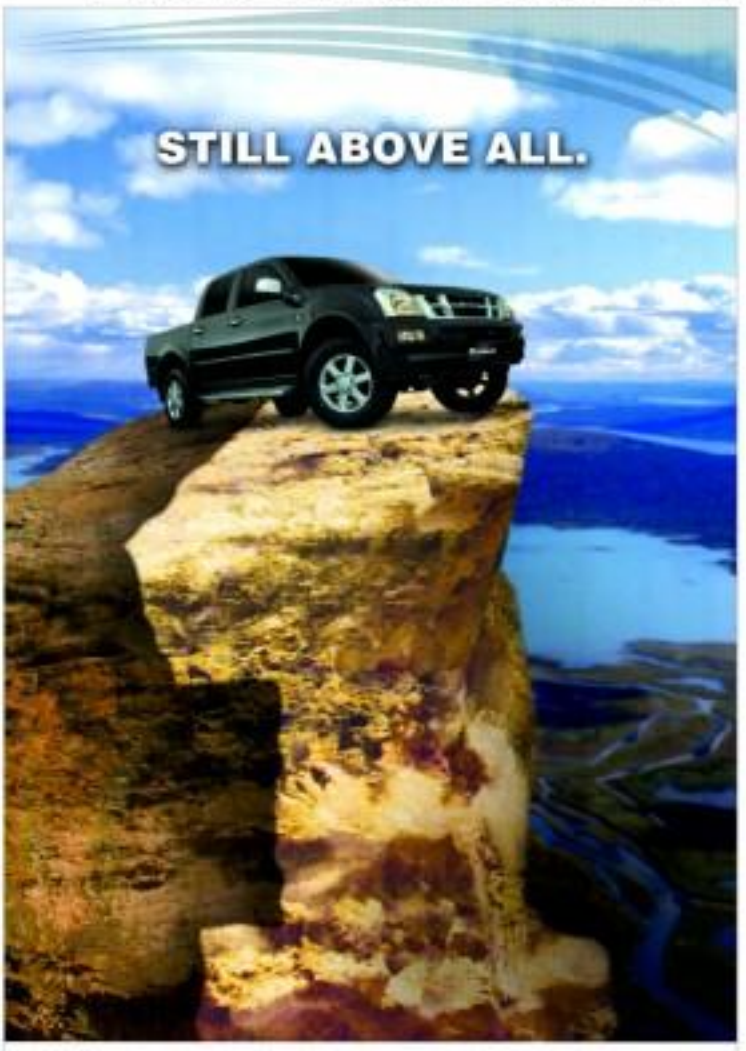

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

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Dialogue

MALACAÑANG SAYS PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo is open to holding a dialogue with members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, including "disgruntled soldiers." The dialogue should "finally clear up the issues that have been muddled by destabilizers and coup plotters and infuse greater unity and professionalism in our soldiery," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said. "It is important to know the underlying causes and reasons that drive our soldiers to meddle in politics."

Editorial

With sentiments continuing to simmer in the Armed Forces and some members of elite fighting units like the Scout Rangers and the Marines alleged to even planning to withdraw their support from her, few things could be more urgent and welcome than a dialogue between the commander in chief and the men at arms. A wide-ranging and candid exchange should give the national leadership a good idea of what is making our soldiers uneasy about their own situation and that of the whole nation, and put it in a better position to address their concerns.

The problem is that probing deep into the sources of the soldiers' discontent may not be what the administration has in mind. Do not bank, Bunye tells us if searching and everything would be on the table. "The dialogue agenda is open for all relevant and vital issues affecting the Armed Forces," he has said. But on the other hand, he won't say if the President would agree to discuss the allegations of cheating in the 2004 presidential elections and the partisan activities of some generals during the polls. He said the administration sees no rejecting "any specific issues at this point," but added, "We don't want the forum to be used for grandstanding or espousing their causes." Earlier he had promised: "All voices within the chain of command will be heard, but the discussion must not be used for propaganda."

The key words here are obviously "grandstanding" and "propaganda." And to the administration's political clairvoyants, these words mean anything relevant to the charges that Mrs Arroyo had rigged or tried to rig the elections, as well as to allegations of graft and corruption in high places. Those are the words the President and her allies use when they dismiss and denounce demands by the opposition and other critics for an explanation of what her ingénue associates with then Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano were about. This is how they call every attempt of the Senate to get to the bottom of scandals linking key administration officials, including the President, and members of her family—like the alleged payoffs from jueteng and the P728-million fertilizer scam.

Barring their issues during her dialogue with the soldiers will not bring the President closer to solving the hurt of the soldiers and healing the division in the Armed Forces. On the few occasions disgruntled military officers have spoken in public, they have demanded an end to corruption and the politicization of the Armed Forces. They have also asked for "clean elections" and pleaded that they be left alone to carry out their duties as professional soldiers.

Unless the President decides to meet these issues headon, the dialogue will be a pointless exercise. She might as well do a monologue and unveil some new package of benefits for the soldiers, and pray it will work better than Rizal did to steal their wounds.

But frank and honest explanations for what transpired in the elections may be the last thing soldiers can expect from their commander in chief. There is no reason to believe she would tell the soldiers what she has consistently refused to explain in full to the Filipino people.

Closing Guantanamo

MORE THAN FOUR YEARS AFTER THE AMERICAN detention camp at Guantánamo Bay opened, the range of voices calling for it to close is widening. Overseas, it runs from the Democrat former US President Jimmy Carter, through 20th Secretary General Kofi Annan and the International Commission of the Red Cross, to the conservative Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi.

Foreign Comment

Tony Blair's reluctance is understandable, particularly given the importance he places on the transatlantic alliance. But the case for voicing a stronger opposition is becoming overwhelming.

It is difficult to see how the basis done to America's image, and the anger it has aroused in the Muslim world, could have been outweighed by any harvest of intelligence. Guantánamo should close and the Prime Minister should stand behind such a call.

The Observer (London)

Faceless news sources

Viewpoint

Juan L. Mercado

PERSONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMmissioner Jorge Sarmiento buried the lede to deny that the NTC had clamped new guidelines on broadcast content. His office, the parliamentary said, merely recalled that the NTC had adopted the 1980 Kapisanan ng mga Brod. banter's Code of Ethics.

Drafted by BBC members, the 11 year-old guidelines stipulate: "If station may use broadcast news to attack it cannot attribute a source." The NTC's letter memo only underscored existing rules on "news from 'unnamed sources' unless the station can achieve 'multiple source confirmation,'" it noted.

The clarification is welcome. In our order of things, a President or general may not advocate for the office of the omnibus community paper or station. The Bill of Rights' craftsmen abridged libertyy of expression in order to limit. In a democracy, self-regulation is the name of the game.

The Swiss Law provides an additional shield for reporters here. Except in national security cases, reporters may not be compelled to reveal their news sources.

The late former chancery of Philippine News Service and I invoked that law before the House committee on education. We had reported the questions for a nationwide test for teachers 16 hours before the actual exams. The honorable congressmen weren't bothered by the confirmed leakage. They were more interested in identifying the whistle blower.

British Broadcasting Corporation's Andrew Gilligan recalled that he was "hung out to dry" by report that Downing Street inserted a misleading claim on Iraq's chemical or biological weapons. "Protecting the identity of sources, on controversial issues, is a historic principle of journalism," BBC said.

These shields are a privilege and carry with them duties. Editors agree that shadowy sources should be the exception, not the rule. Is it the other way around here?

Journalistic independence uses larger arm-twisting, on the perception of it," warned a Duke law school professor on "Journalists Without Borders." Transparency is the news process and accountability to readers and listeners are crucial. Thus, rules of ethics try to ensure those attributions.

But there is no order and order. "There are 35 million laws trying to enforce the Ten Commandments," it has been said.

The Inquirer, Associated Press and other media groups have guidelines for their staffers. The Philippine Press Institute's 11-point code of ethics, for example, urges "accuracy and objectivity" in news reports. And the late Star's multi-awarded papers have as a "Code of Standards" that covers journalistic concerns—from accuracy to conflict of interest.

But "a free press is not necessarily an responsible press," Tulsa Tribune's editor Marvin Stone pointed out. "Much depends on the people in moments when key options, the Center for Media Freedom noted in a study. They are not staff members. Many block-timers never heard of professional guidelines. Still the rules adversaries, pumped into the 800 and the 1470 cities Philippines DBT. Help resolve this vital issue?

In print, publications catch lapses from each other's back under the cloak of "reliable sources." Reporters' opinions are sometimes slipped in as "quotes" from "officials requesting anonymity." Big papers have oversight structures that enable sustained challenge to glib use of nameless sources.

Codes of ethics are not self-implementing. Frail men and women it's to work by them, under deadline pressures and under what Times editor Harold Evans called "the inevitable tunnel-vision—the complexity of forces and agendas that are casual mention for ourselves but allow you know."

In this process codes' craft, "anonymous sources" have provided the most notorious lapses. Journalists struggle wondering confidential sources has given The New York Times plenty of headaches," writes the paper's public editor Byron Calame. "So it's not surprising that the paper's anonymous-sourcing guidelines have been getting major attention."

Under the tightest ownership rules, the Times insists, at least one editor must know the confidential source's name before the story gets published. That's not all. Readers should also be told why the paper believes a source is considered so anonymity. This is a radical switch from a previous policy that "readers simply would not by trust why the source asked for it."

"These two changes are profoundly altering the role of confidential sources," Calame writes. These are numerical checks and balances. And they have repeating become, all too often, the opposite: Journalists duty can prop up readers on flawless sources with nary a challenge from editors or readers and listeners.

The use of anonymous sources is a matter best of last resort. That's basic. It should be used only when the story is of compelling public interest. A compelling reason must have the source's identity. Its must confirm there was no way to get the story out. And the source must have first hand knowledge.

Reporters and editors must also bear to reveal—try to unearth the source's potential biases. The late *BusinessWorld* founder Neal Cruz, for example, would insist on a box that included the writer's affiliations. To present a source, journalists may not resort to contrivin in the story. Anonymity is granted, instead, because reporters gain the reward.

Readers and listeners have a stake in media. They too should constantly challenge the use of anonymous sources, so that this becomes the rare exception, not the rule.

"Tell me ellies, I like prose in. I usually struggle factually-reckless, or on our seven days, bulk," columnist Meg Greenfield once wrote. Tighter oversight on nameless sources could reduce our bad days.

* * *

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Betrayals

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

KINACO HOWE SAYS THAT "INGLESIAS NA Katakohan: EDT," a documentary purporting to prove a "Left-Right" conspiracy to topple government and justifying EDT, it now available in CD form and could be had upon request. The computer-savvy may even download it from the Malacañang website.

Still, I can at least assure him the CD will not find its way into the pirates' hats in Quiapo and elsewhere. Even pirates have taste and draw the line at junk. As to downloading it from the government website, I think the computer-savvy would find better uses for their DSL time, which is not inexpensive. Given reading porn is a much more intelligent use of the Internet.

The first time I heard the premise about the "Left-Right" conspiracy, which was one of the "subversion" of EDT, I thought I heard Bill I all over again. That is exactly the same premise of the Marcosian decree that put the country under martial law. Marcos then attributed the opposition and rebellion to the time to a "Left-Right conspiracy," identifying the CPP-NPA as constituting the first, and the "oligarchs," led by the Laurels, as constituting the second. How they managed to bridge the three chasms to form a bridge, Marcos never told us.

The notion, of course, ridiculously spelled out in a book called "Today's Revolution: Democracy" (note the resemblance to the title "Nglesias na Katakohan: EDT"), was that he was the "Center" in the middle, so to speak, to a right-to-the-theme he also parachuted himself as the center not just of Left and Right but of top and bottom. At the bottom, he said, were the communists who wanted to mount a bloody "socialist" revolution. At the top were the oligarchs who wanted to restore "feudalism" at a point and were resisting his efforts to reform society. That notion, of course, now looks allow than the Three Stooges. Marcos was about as convincing as George W Bush, Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld are today.

Indeed, all the Arroyo administration's enterprise at recycling that propaganda line is reminded me of a famous slogan during martial law that said, "Sa mundong ito, walang imposible." In this world, nothing is impossible. Only in this world, nothing is impossible. Only in this world, nothing is impossible. Only in

Gov't making martyrs out of leftist reps

THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD RESOLVE THE case of the five party-list representatives if it doesn't want to make martyrs out of them. The Left has always been good at making martyrs. The five were charged with rebellion which, the Supreme Court says, is a "continuing crime." Under this principle, the five can only technically under arrest. But they resisted police attempts by enlisting themselves to the protective custody of the House of Representatives. House members quickly closed ranks to protect the rights of the five colleagues. Speaker Jose de Venecia, Majority Floor Leader Arthur Defensor and Minority Leader Francis Escudero. The five are now headed to Speaker Jose de Venecia's office.

* * *

The preliminary investigation begins today. Under the rules of court, this can take as long as 10 days. If the five refuse to cooperate, they will lose many warrants of arrest. But the police were quite peeved by Rep. Lisa Masa's decision to leave the House premises to visit her husband who was detained at the Philippine National Police headquarters. Police officials said Masa made with the police and the House leadership. Those in the leftist lawmakers' shrewd to go back to the mountains if they are arrested, and it's easy to see why the police are now apprehensive about the mobility of the five, who have done with Rep. Crispin Beltran.

* * *

Is House non-cooperation as saying he's "literally dared" of taking care of his "boarders," but he is nothing to his position. Here the arrest warrants and the police are at their door. I am sure the police policing correctly but since the Left we milk it for propaganda, we can see the media and NGO hollering in parents' preference.

By the way, the statement of Ty Romeo lawyers on the leftist representatives' claims to political asylum is interesting. Romeo is a fugitive and has while the leftist politicians have been elected, they have no qualms about supporting the three People's Army with congressional funds. Romeo is a fugitive from justice for killing two of both worlds," as he cited as Romeo really pretending to have created a class link between the above-ground Left group and the New People's Army based on the use of the journalists' Consecrable Development Fund.

* * *

Does believe the relationship between the two chambers of Congress deteriorated into open animosity. I had always felt that leaders of two chambers was an expensive and useless set-up. The Senate is our more expensive debating society with only four bills passed last year and nearly P2 billion spent on maintaining a relative few votes about P400 million. But the pull-back is not happening only over major GMA's issues.

Thereasita Saal, former Bataan representative and relentless overseer and now a nominee of the Hyun Bi, who supported the parliamentary system until his breakaway from GMA, has proposed one in a 19-page memo, dated "Decided day Philippines Year Two Thousand-ty" that the gridlock man as had the key Cory Aquino's time. He noted that in 1987, the majority of those who won seats in Congress ran under Aquino's Lakas party. However, almost all them could not have won without her personal endorsements. So, she had a hard time winning congressional support for her key legislative priorities.

This country does not need two chambers that are always fighting each other. It needs only one chamber that reflects demographic realities. Only then will we see faster delivery of public services and real progress.

* * *

The last had barely ended to Makati following the discovery of a cache of explosives in the Makati Blanker's in Global City. Post Brothers, to run the "Un-Negative" entrepreneurial fair organized by SPM presidents and presidential adviser on entrepreneurship Ann A. Concepcion. El Ar monde Bancesina Jr., president of CMB Foundation Development, is also a consultant for Angkas (one-line motorcycle for and that hosts private and government agencies, including the widespread access, southeast entrance for ordinary citizens and is now becoming international and legendary" to see successful entrepreneurs, such as Concepcion, interesting those who wanted to go into business, no matter how small. Bautista, who took time out to share his wisdom and experience, described Concepcion as a "brilliant revolutionist" from the one being addressed by the other presidents. In fact, it showed "the wit-bravery of entrepreneurs in making positive results for our country to tackle the behavior of the seven-billion country."

* * *

Defeated vice presidential candidate Loren Legarda, in a letter to this newspaper, has accused me of "ignoring a fundamental rule of journalism—that both sides of a controversy should be quoted or cited to ensure fairness in reportage and commentary." I find rather extreme that Tito President Noli de Castro's lawyers, Romulo Macalintal, who's also GMA's lawyer, claimed that the Presidential Electoral Tribunal already concluded opening in June 30 reports of questionable ballots—including pre-shaded and any. Cebu gave a 1.02 million margin of victory to GMA and about 900,000 to De Castro, which comprise about 90 percent of their overall margin of victory. Macalintal claimed that no substantial fraud had been discovered in the case for the two top posts and that if the several ballot allegations of electoral fraud should be guessed.

I saw Legarda in various social gatherings since that item came out, the most recent being the Italian National Day a few weeks ago. Each time she would pretend not to see me. I didn't mind it and I would repeatedly say I'd be happy to print her side. All she needed to do was to interact her lawyer, Marc Brillantes, to write me. But she never did. Maybe she thought my presence her unfair charge. Any hiccup key Loren, should now having a penny four tal flows.

The media fight back

BECAUSE OF THE RECENT POLITICAL EVENTS, the government has seized its iron hand and directed it toward the media as well. Are we the next ones?

As I write this, media groups and individuals are in court, making appeals for continued, prohibition and declaration issued. Time constraints prevented the firms signing the petition, but one of the media groups I am affiliated with signed on one of the petitioners.

The decision to file a petition was made after two meetings between the Free Legal Assistance Group (FLAG) and media practitioners. The consensus of the persons who attended discussions is that the petition mentioned, and unfounded charges were made to assure that the petition addressed the concerns of both print and broadcast journalists.

The petition is divided into "to court" respondents connected with their work. Why did the media group count? Here is a technical summary of the allegations. This could be very instructive for those who are not in the legal profession.

1. The decision that the Executive Department, represented by the executive secretary the secretary of justice, the director general of the Philippine National Police, the chair of the National Telecommunications Commission, and their duly authorized representatives, agents or other persons acting under their authority or supervision, have no lawful power, authority or jurisdiction to prohibit the publication or airing of news and commentary based upon the decision.

Only a court, with its accompanying due process safeguards, may impose colonels based prior restraints, where the grounds elsewhere are duly proved.

2. To prohibit the executive secretary, the PNP, NTC and NTC from imposing any forms of content-based prior restraint on the press, in a formal or informal manner or form, or to punish any of the many stated means of administrative sanctions or criminal prosecution. The threat of official intervention—in the form of administrative sanctions or criminal prosecution—is just as damaging as a law press as the fact of it.

3. To extend and set aside the issuance of the NTC, prohibiting the press from broadcasting or airing news and commentary that, in the NTC's sole and unfettered discretion, are "subversive," which "tend" to propose or incite violence or rebellion, or which constitute "rebellious/subversive propaganda/broadcasts, false reports, interviews and other similar or related materials."

The NTC does not have any lawful power, authority or jurisdiction to penalize these, much less weigh what is subversive, rebellious or false. Congress has long been repealed, when merely "tends" to propose or incite violence or rebellion (whatever that means to the NTC), and what constitutes "rebellious/subversive propaganda, statements and declarations" (whatever that is).

The dangers of unreviewable administrative actions that impose prior restraints on the press are so manifest as elements. The petitioners seek the issuance of the Court declaring that any of the wrong acts of the law to exclude speech as proscribed by the Constitution.

The petition is not limited on the declaration of a state of national emergency; hence, the lifting of Presidential Proclamation 1017 does not in any way affect the nature and objectives of the petition.

The petitioners are media organizations, journalists and broadcasters, and members of the academe.

The respondents are Executive S. Ermita, executive secretary; Raul Gonzalez, secretary of justice; Arturo Lomibao, director general of the Philippine National Police; and Ronaldo Silverio, chair of the National Telecommunications Commission.

The venue is the Court of Appeals. The Supreme Court has no jurisdiction to hear petitions for declaratory relief.

PLDG has consistently upheld the concrete antipathy of the Supreme Court, most of whose members were appointed by Presidents Macapagal-Arroyo. FLAG also has concerns over the outcome of the petitions challenging LOI 7.

As the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility (CMFR) explained, the petition asserts media's rights against any censorship or prior restraint—rights that are protected under the Constitution, Republic Act 8975 and the Bill of Rights, the primer grounds. It holds executive officials (ermita, Lomibao, Solis and Gonzales) responsible for prior restraints and threatens that seek to impose restrictions on the media.

The petition asserts that "only a court, with its accompanying due process safeguards, may impose content-based prior restraints." The petitioners therefore ask the court to prohibit the officials mentioned from "directly or indirectly" imposing content-based prior restraint on the press, be it by oral or informal, direct or in the form of designated or thinly veiled threats of administrative sanctions or criminal prosecution.

Only the court can order due process, and not any executive agency, have the right to impose restrictions on media outputs.

CMFR and other media groups like the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism, the Philippine Press Institute, and the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines signed as respondents. Other media groups and individual journalists have joined as petitioners.

All are one in saying, "never again."

* * *

Send feedback to ccruz@philst.com.ph.

Listen and read

IN THE LAST YEARS OF HER LIFE, SHE WOULD send me books about herself. Such was her reserve, however, that there seemed nothing self-serving, nothing egotistical at all about her doing so. Each volume was carefully inscribed with a personal message, generic reminders and suggestions marking the lessons to be gleaned from her life's work. And how glowering her schoolmarmish scrawl in the many books she sent.

She was the kind of person who insisted that it wasn't old fashioned to aspire—even demand—that those who enjoyed either prominence or some kind of comfort, intellectual, spiritual, moral or financial must do something for the country through the increase by its or to be exposed ways. She was one of those rare kinds of leaders, one who maligned in misfortune, and was persistent when misfortune was the order of the day. She was a visionary, too, seeing that the future lay in building the country from the ground up. Progress, for her, was "middle out" not "trickle down."

She outlined what she set out to do, in government: "I at once insisted on democratization, meaning processes that respect the person and demonstrate oversight-oriented dispositions... I insisted on the primacy of the human person and the sanctity of life... Before my time, the procedure was to issue orders from the top to the lower levels. We changed that procedure. Henceforth, our policy was to let workers propose and problems to be solved by the people themselves. In the process, the level of participation, which is the barangay. Each barangay group would consult its constituents, decide what their local problems and priorities were, and then propose solutions. I launched a program of action to initiate in the welfare departments. Like any revolutionary idea, the concept was met with opposition and cynicism. To make sure it was implemented, my staff and I toured one all over the country, to listen to the people, list their needs and requests, and to train local social workers in the mindset of sensitivities to determine a barangay consensus. The local social workers we trained would in turn instruct the empowerment groups in the barangays, the poor telling the workers about their problems."

Explaining what she was president of having accomplished as secretary of Social Welfare and Development, she said, "We really democratized operations. We decentralized. We empowered the local level operations. Before, even a clerk any where had to be appointed from Manila, and absolutely he had to wait until he could come up with a policies, a replica to the appointing powers... It is rather amazing that in this country, we are the only democracy shared to empower the poor. They want to have some power..."

The late Bob Zaragoza, in his biography of her, "One Woman's Liberating: The Life and Career of Leticia Shahani," presented the poor people as "an effective as the militant labor leaderships." She "freed herself to emphasize, when shooting her eyes right to bring back the child she was, or the schoolgirl, or the young marching bride. Her speech to journalists in Malacañang Palace, she says that the few—though sometimes the words became sing, sing, even sarcastic, in remembered anger. Then she fixes eyes still dare and flash, and you get a sense of the young woman who was a humorous compassion that influenced everyone."

Shahani's title seems to have been inspired by something she told him. Describing to the artist what she liked in literature, she wanted, she said, "a woman fights back effectively not by becoming more masculine, but by becoming more feminine. She can liberate herself, formerly she had the does that by participating in all kinds of activity, even those ostensibly for operating 'liberals' for instance. I don't like politics, but I went into it because it is vital to be involved in movements that have impact on the country's development and progress. I went into social welfare because I wanted to work the poor self-reliance that was one way of 'solving' the problems of the uninformed and unskilled, to liberate themselves."

She combined with more vigorous self-analysis: "But to the process of helping others, I am liberating myself. I am just as involved in my own personal and inner growth. Psychology—but can range freely in any direction because I have made myself participate in the entire gamut of human endeavor and can say, I have personal competence in various areas. One thing is a woman secretary to the so-called macho world. Participation is the key procedure, not confrontation."

In days, why did she send me those books? Did she be beyond a desire to make a good-bye gesture to a young writer who had been encouraging and as a sign of friendship between families? To me, each book or letter, her gestures came from her recognizing the duty of elders to pass on to the young, more than just formal statements. Solid inspiration to be used in the future. Her "Liberating" was her personal spark—but perhaps, had hoped to achieve a supposed youth. Augustine heard a voice, and it told him, "Tolle, lege"—listen, read. That word out of music, talking to a future saint, but it could be extended to mean "observe and learn." Shahani, with her keen intuition, impressions, perhaps, realized, but also often authentic generation, "Listen, read." The most should to be effective, if we realize that the books she sent to young writers heavenly those who have gone before us.

Epiphany. Shahani Lim. The Poetry to so many grateful people, like myself—farewell, and thank you.

Malcolm

FOR THE FIRST 14 YEARS OF MY LIFE, I WAS CONTENTED with having two younger brothers. Bin Mon and Ted one the imbalance of having two children being pitted against one whenever we fought among ourselves, since almost always, one brother would side with another, although as in our various parties, party-switching was common. So when and Ted decided to make things equal by creating a new player.

Initially we objected vigorously. We argued that good things came in two—Mon the classic Three Musketeers, to the immortal Three Stooges, and the original Power Rangers who were originally composed of two girls and two boys.

However, Mom and Dad pointed out the Ninja Turtles and Rapunzel's sadness were four in number. And when I wrote the Green Ranger name into the new Power Rangers, I knew I was lost.

They asked me if we wanted a sister or another brother. After careful deliberation, we decided that another boy was more fun to wrestle with and than a girl.

True enough, in February 1998, a baby boy was added to our family. He was the height of my forearm, I remember, the moment I saw him in a plastic crib in the hospital nursery. What seemed his most distinctive feature was that he was going baby to us. But I sensed the same by deciding to wait for him to grow up and see if he looked like one of us.

Finally, Malcolm was brought home. I longed to hold him, but I was fitted with security from fragile was he? Even the audience on my family's week-old puppy that mysteriously died after I cooed it in the air and caught it as it came falling at normal acceleration due to gravity? I decided I would not try that on him.

After a few weeks, I could not wait for him to grow up. When would he lift his head? Roll over? Crawl? Walk? Talk? Imagine that! I could not resist him gone every day for the first four years of his life.

The same year shortly after Christmas, I left for Singapore for my high school education. I was more concerned about how fast I could make new friends there than how much I would miss my family. Even when homesickness was at its peak during the first few months in the city-state, I never missed Malcolm. It was only when I returned home again during my first holiday that the thought occurred to me. Did he will remember me? I had been away for three months.

When I first approached my youngest brother, now 11 months old and previously unfamiliar with the aroma of his paper, he greeted me with nothing but an unsmiling eyes. He shied his head in dubious recognition, but his eyes never left mine. When he leaned forward to embrace me, "solid" from my grandmother and tantrum-filled the place.

After a week, I flew back to Singapore.

Three other four years and after taking 29 flights between Manila and Singapore, I can now do that 30-hour trip on the flight switches. He has grown twice as tall and gained weight eight times, weighing a baby 66 pounds and counting. He belly is as round as his face.

Once when my 18-year-old brother flies and I were putting for me groceries, we noticed two pretty teenage girls glancing our direction. When they saw us walking toward us, we pulled our cheeks and assumed our best poses. But before we knew it, they were down on their knees with their cell phone cameras, asking Malcolm to pose for shots. My brother and I could only look on with envy.

Whenever I am with female friends and he also happens to be around, I am reminded to quiet their chest anxieties. Malcolm is full easily by his childish charm and wide smiles. Once this early days are practicing that he will someday become a heartbreaker.

One day during Christmas vacation, my brother brought Malcolm along to watch a movie with some of his friends. In the middle of a movie, Malcolm whispered to the girl beside him, "It's feeding while here. Can you hold my hand?"

Imagine that! He is 5 and already he has become a smooth talker.

I can hope Malcolm will grow up funny as I can be will understand that not all our female friends are our girlfriends. That's perhaps he will laugh when I tell him how much he will regret girls when he was 5 or when he learns how much trouble he caused us when he mixed up the names of our girlfriends. Then, one, he will learn to ask for girls only across a year, and get to enjoy it when his nephews do the things he is now doing to us, his friends.

Stephen Cu, 16, is a first year BS Biology student at the Ateneo de Manila University.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@philstar.com.ph. Please include your full name, address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or graduated. Be patient as your article is being read by our staff. Give it time to be published.

Young Blood

Stephen Cu

We want to know what the young people around us are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the seventeen-being and below.—Ed.

And Dad pointed out

They Said

Political default

"It would be painful if we do our patient this case just because they think it's all part of politics or just because those who died or suffered injuries were poor to life and should just be forgotten."

—Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita on government efforts to hold liable those responsible for the Philippine Marine encampment shootout that killed 14 people and injured hundreds

Groaning budget

"Yes, budget groans under the weight of loan repayments, which is likely to worsen the engaging in the national spent that is to remain."

—Rep. Rolando Andaya, outgoing chair of the House of Representatives committee on appropriations, on the long, delayed, protracted budget

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The gall of the 'best' leader

LETTERS

CONRADO DE QUIROS MADE ME laugh (which he said: "I love Cory," DTN, 2/28/06). Indeed, Presidente Corazon Aquino had her share of sweet stating her wish, but no comparison with Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's as an inside. The foreign administration excels in corruption, lying, cheating and in all other shortcomings similar to governance.

I wonder if GMA and her cohorts remember the golden rule of God. Does she really love our country? I believe that love is sacrifice, it does not boast, it does not envy, love rejoices with the truth, it does not delight evil. (1 Cor. 13)

When really saddened [and angered me] was her reviling the whole world (but she's the "best" person on God's set. The gall of this arrogant! She's living in a world of make-believe. Are her feet still on the ground? It's evident that our administration is founded on a fatally narrow insight as it always tell the truth. God commanded us to do so.

After three votes from the Philippine law house and abuse of her office, is there no room for repentance? Is there no room for humility? Is there no room for love? Is there no room for God? Is there no room for Christ? "Let nothing one do selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves." (Philippians 2:3) "Do not be deceived; God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows." (Galatians 6:7) "Seeking is all creation a ladder from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account." (Hebrews 4:13)

—LINDA CRUZ,
c2442316@mail.11.blue.net

Working to promote interest of youth

WE APPRECIATE THE OBSERVATION OF Cielo Mata Ramos about the deletion of the provision pertaining to the youth (Section 12, Article II of the 1987 Constitution) in the proposed Constitution submitted to Congress by the Consultative Commission. (DTN, 2/20/06)

During the Council of State meeting (last January), which then Chief Raul Espinosa and I attended, we were given the opportunity to point out this deletion. In that meeting, we also had the opportunity to share with Chief Justice Reynato of the ConCom our point of view regarding the deletion.

It has been appointed as member of the Church Change Advocacy Council created by Executive Order 491. This council, which is composed mostly of former ConCom members, passed a resolution recommending to Congress the reinstatement of the deleted provision. The council is now conducting its key areas of the country a series of consultations with the youth. The consultations focus on the Charter change and other youth-related issues with the aim of coming up with a stronger national youth policy.

We recognize the vigilance of the youth in this particular issue. Rest assured that the National Youth Commission is doing its best to protect the interest of the sector. We hope that with our collective effort, we will be able to work this situation to the advantage of the Filipino youth.

—RICHARD ANN M. HALILI,
chair and chief executive officer,
National Youth Commission,
Mabalacat, Manila

Still counting on SSS' commitment to its mission

AS EARLY AS JUNE 2005, THE BRANCH manager of the Social Security System-Iloilo sent the head of the accounting department of the SSS main office in Quezon City a request for a memo update on my cancelled check amounting to P86,300. This check covered the compensation due to 16 employees with heads of my father, Magno B. Bongkac.

However, in spite of the urgency of SSS-Iloilo's request, which was followed up on Sept. 12, 2005, SSS main office refused to release the said check. It does not cover love rejoices with the truth, it does not think evil. (1 Cor. 13)

When really saddened [and angered me] was her reviling the whole world (but she's the "best" person on God's set. The gall of this arrogant! She's living in a world of make-believe. Are her feet still on the ground? It's evident that our administration is founded on a fatally narrow insight as it always tell the truth. God commanded us to do so.

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—LINDA CRUZ,
c2442316@mail.11.blue.net

Foolproof against fake CTPL policies

WE THANK ROBERTO GENERAL FOR HIS reading in (on 8/2). (I commit just how complicated, inconvenient and cumbersome it would be to the motor vehicle registrant if a "dreaming house" were to require the issuance of CTPL compulsory third party liability) policies.

From the way he explained it, the "dreaming house" would computerize the process for the motor vehicle registrant who would have to course CTPL payment through the banks. How this would avoid the issuance of fake CTPL and prevent the insurance companies from cheating on their taxes or premiums is incomprehensible in a transaction arrangement constituted by the insurance agents and the banks.

General admitted that the "payment" insurance firms that had previously insured CTPLs) would be the same. But he claimed that it would be a totally different "ball game." It was like saying that the players who had removed uniforms to replace their old ones, possibly would stop cheating. Only the hopelessly naive will believe that. Besides, the vile experience has been cited before through a "computer," and it proved to be an unqualified failure.

General explained that under the Insurance Commission proposal, the vehicle owner would still be required to look for an agent to purchase his cover. The agent secures quotations and informs the bank through a computer, giving the name of the registrant and the license plate of the vehicle, after which the policy is printed out in the computer. The bank is supposed to credit the money to the government, even before it receives payment. If the agent has no computer, he can use an Internet café. Will this anti-dimension fancy?

In the proposal, there is no guarantee that the policy will not be fake, so that the government would get its share of taxes. Even if the bank gets the payment, it can withhold or delay the remittance of the taxes, as some banks have been wont to do in regard to other taxes paid through them.

The OMS proposal is the simplest and the best. It is convenient to the registrant because he does not have to go over numerous offices to purchase his CTPL policy. All he has to do is go straight to the Land Transportation Office regional unit and pay the CTPL premium, along with his registration fees. The registration receipt will be his Certificate of Cover by the OMS. There no premium will be remitted directly and instantly to the national treasury.

This will not create a monopoly; private companies can still participate through the registration system.

General claims that the OMS does not have the assets to cover the entire CTPL fund. What private company can match the OMS' assets of P200.8 billion? Besides, what is more important is that the motor vehicle owner and the potential accident victim are fully secured by insurance as the OMS proposal is foolproof against fake policies. The government is also assured of taxes.

—JOSEFINAL. TALEÑA,
senior vice president,
General Insurance Group,
Government Service Insurance System,
Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City

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INQUIRER Southern Luzon

Lito Jan Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Florante G. Solmiano

'Batingting' warns Quezon folk of disaster

By Dello T. Maliari Jr.
Lucena City

TO PREVENT A REpeat of the calamitous tragedies that swept the towns of Real, Infanta and General Nakar (Reina) in northern Quezon two years ago, people in the government and private sectors have collaborated to put up an early warning system in disaster-prone areas in the province.

A central part of the system is the "batingting," a device consisting of an oxygen tank cut in half and attached with a handle, and a metal bar that sends a loud, sharp clang echoing to distant villages.

The tanks were painted bright orange for easy visibility.

On Dec. 9 last year, several of these devices, as well as radio equipment, were donated by telecommunications giant Smart Communications Inc. to the three Quezon towns that were battered by a series of killer floods and landslides in late November and December 2004 that left hundreds of people dead and millions of pesos worth of property destroyed.

The "batingting" were displayed to strategic villages where warnings of an impending disaster could be sounded out immediately among them, according to Darwin Flores, Smart's community partnership program manager. Each device cost P1,200 to manufacture.

Real received four two-way radios, one base radio, and 19 "batingting," while Infanta and General Nakar each got three two-way radios, one base radio, and 20 "batingting."

Flores said his company also distributed 15,000 leaflets written in Filipino that contained steps on what to do in case of flash flood, landslide and tsunami. The information materials were disseminated to disaster-prone villages of the three towns, he said.

He said Smart took an active part in the design, sourcing and fabrication of the "batingting" under the "Support for the Community-Based Early Warning System" project of the company in the three towns.

The project was implemented in cooperation with the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology, Department of Science and Technology, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, National Disaster Coordinating Council and local government units.

RAMON Abarca, Smart's public affairs head, demonstrates the use of the "batingting" to villagers in northern Quezon.

Safety campaign

Quezon Gov. Rafael Nantes said that immediately after rehabilitation efforts in the devastated areas began, he initiated a safety information and education campaign among the villagers.

He said his office had been conducting subsequently training and exercises to make the people aware of what to do in case of another calamity. His staff have also been distributing safety information leaflets during meetings and barangay assemblies.

Nantes also provided radio units and other emergency equipment to villages in the area.

"The safety of the people starts with their full understanding of the dangers and the correct response to any eventuality. We have to equip the people [with] the capacity to avoid and survive any calamity," he said.

But the lawmaker stressed that the most important step to prevent disasters was not to threaten and abuse the environment. "If people and concerned government agencies do not learn, nature will again unleash its wrath upon us," Nantes said.

Logging in the Sierra Madre's long mountain chain has been identified as among the key causes of natural disasters, he said.

Disaster watchers

General Nakar's environment and natural resources officer said the portable radios and the "batingting" were given to concerned persons in the villages along the Agos River.

"Most of them were placed in the service of the persons manning watch points in Barangays Pagsangahan at the upper portion of the Agos River," said Jingjing Amejudo, who is also an environment management specialist.

"The sound of the 'batingting,' when pounded hard, can be heard far enough to reach the nearby areas," she said. The system has been synced to produce emergency situations and found useful, she added.

Infanta's disaster and coordinating council communications officer said the municipal government also enlisted on the same system by manning setup to alert residents.

"We have our own flood watch points in the upper Agos River and rain gauges that can immediately relay to us any alarming situations for our quick response," Ben Cabantoy said.

A river mechanizing project that local officials already started will help reduce the danger of flash floods, he said.

Watch points

Benny Bacon, coordinator of the Quezon Disaster Coordinating Council, said the watch points were being manned by trained villagers, together with members of volunteer radio groups in the area.

"All information is immediately transmitted to all villagers and to the emergency operation center," Bacon said.

The watch points use radios for different water levels of the Agos River that correspond to specific courses of action.

"Its evacuation sig-

nal will indicate the time that trucks are positioned along with rescue groups," Bacon said.

Amejudo said General Nakar had started a survey of the river, with the assistance of a non-government group and two volunteer geologists from the University of the Philippines.

The survey aims to determine critical areas for erosion and landslides, river characteristics, crops suitable for planting along the banks, buffer zone species and engineering interventions.

The results of the survey are now being presented to villagers to help them decide on what appropriate measures to undertake, Amejudo said.

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Across the NATION

MILF survives rebellion by anti-peace guerrillas

COTABATO CITY—Leaders of a Moro separatist group negotiating peace with the government failed a plot to unseat them by a faction that was opposed to the peace negotiations.

Guerrillas loyal to Moro Islamic Liberation Front chief Murad Ebrahim held siege in a village in Sapa Rusom, Maguindanao to prevent rebel guerrillas from massing up and protesting against the holding of the talks and the leadership of Murad.

Two senior MILF leaders, Mohamid Abdullah alias Commander Iskan and Emad Mutreg alias Commander Gumora, confirmed to the Inquirer that their forces had clinged Sarangani Peninsula down on Saturday to thwart a planned power grab by rebel MILF units against its chair, Murad Ebrahim.

They said their action had the blessings of the MILF Central Committee and its peace panel.

MURAD

The renegades were led by Ameril Umbra Kato and Rashid Tundok, who support Imam Ulomboto, younger brother of the late MILF chief Salamat Hashim. The two want Imam to become MILF chair.

Abdullah and Mutreg were blunted consecutive in the Moro National Liberation Front before martial law.

Col. Frank del Prado of the 6th Army Infantry Division said the two MILF factions earlier clashed in Mamasapano and Datu Saudi Ampatuan towns in Maguindanao.

Del Prado said the military would not interfere because of a ceasefire agreement with the MILF.

The Malaysian government, which is hosting the peace talks, had informed the MILF and government panels that the meeting scheduled this month had to be postponed indefinitely following President Macapagal-Arroyo's declaration of a nationwide state of emergency last week.

But a source said Malaysian authorities were alarmed by a report of the International Monitoring Team against "fratricidal enemy" in the MILF.

Chief government negotiator Jesus Dureza said earlier that the two panels were to sign an initial agreement on ancestral domain, the thorniest issue in the talks.

The ancestral domain agreement, Dureza said, would signal the end of exploratory talks and the start of formal negotiations.

Malaysian and the formal negotiations were expected to last until September, when a peace agreement would have been signed. Neth R. Mendoza and Charlie C. Enriquez, *PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Pact on ancestral domain seen this month

DARP SOUBIO, TAKLAC CITY—The pseace negotiating peace between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front are set to sign this month an accord on ancestral domain, the Inquirer had learned.

Rene Saenzuros, deputy presidential adviser on the peace process, revealed this development here on Wednesday.

He said the issue on ancestral domain had been hammered under the panel settled the agenda on economic development and rehabilitation, and security and transfer.

"This is going to be a very important milestone," Saenzuros told the Inquirer.

SAENZUROS

In an interview during a pre-activation of typhoon on ongoing negotiations with rebel groups, Saenzuros said the MILF was having its land rights recognized "within the framework of the Ipra (Indigenous Peoples Rights Act)."

"Many people are saying that there would be a Moro homeland. Christians groups have apprehensions about this. They have nothing to fear, we assure we may shall be carried for them (MILF)," he said.

Saenzuros said the consensus on the last issue had been reached in the 10th exploratory talks held in Malaysia on Feb. 6.

Both parties can now move forward in the signing of a comprehensive agreement in the three areas of concern, he said.

"We are now at the homestretch," he said, referring to the negotiations that began three years ago with the 13,000-strong MILF which he described as the "biggest organized Islamic force in the world."

The talks, which he said Malaysia has helped facilitate and which Libya and Indonesia have closely monitored, have also prepared the establishment of the Bangsa Moro Development Authority (BMDA).

In the plenipotentiary session held in October last year, Saenzuros said several countries have committed P1.02 million for the capability building of the BMDA.

"Governments are watching how this agreement is going to conclude," he said.

Saenzuros said he sent his regret letters coming in the run-up to the September settlement.

At the same time, he said the ceasefire between the military and the MILF has "held up," with skirmishes "significantly dropping" in recent months.

"I'm very optimistic about the conclusion because both parties are positive about it," Saenzuros said. Rinalyn Dyrjas, *PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Roundup

Sangue folk flee homes

Mayor's suspected killer named

Menings scare in Ozamiz

Catanduanes trader robbed

Robbers preying on Indians fall

Batangas dad's house ransacked

Laguna rural bank heist

Mikhiamas shot dead

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
Department of Science and Technology
Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA)

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Option	Brief Description	Approved Budget for the Contract	Contract Duration
Lot 1	Specialty Services (21 Specialty Counties)	P 1,000,000.00	May to December 2006
Lot 2	Locational Services (20 Locations)	P 1,470,000.00	May to December 2006
Lot 3	Rental of Photocopying Machines	P 60,000.00	May to December 2006

Activities	Schedule/Time	Venue
1. Issuance of Bid Requirements & Bidding Documents	March 23, 2006	General Services Division 3F PAGASA Central Office Bldg.
2. Pre-bid Conference	March 27, 2006 - 1:00p.m.	Amihan Conference Room 3F PAGASA Central Office Bldg.
3. Opening of Eligibility Requirements and Envelope I	April 3, 2006 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.	
4. Opening of Bids - Envelope II	April 5, 2006 - 2:00 p.m.	
5. Bid Evaluation & Post-qualification	April 6 - 10, 2006	
6. Notice of Award	April 10, 2006	

Approved by:

(Sgd.) PRISCO S. NILO
Chairman, PAGASA BAC

METRO
Editor Emer G. Dipasupil

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FOUR DIGIT: 6 4 5 4
MEGALOTTO 6/45: 1 42 16 23 38 45
P5,811,444.00

Cops hit wrong target

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

DRIVER TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT Group (TMG) operatives were relieved yesterday hours after they fired at a car driven by the vice president of a pharmaceutical firm in what the police said was a case of mistaken identity.

Rodolfo Chavez, 46, sustained gunshot wounds in his leg and shoulder after police fired at his silver Toyota Vios in Pasig City a few minutes after midnight yesterday.

"It was a mistake I mentioned. They were determined to kill whoever was inside the car," he said in radio interviews.

TMG Chief Supt. Augusto Ingcanan identified the operatives as SPO2 Jaime de Guzman, SPO1 Joseph Martin, PO3 Jerry Atanacio, PO2 Ramel Nagorio, PO2 Reynaldo Bolagtan, PO2 Marcelino Dacoyda and PO1 Archie Chavez.

"This is really a very unfortunate incident. The men that constituted the road block have been dismissed, and three firearms seized to a ballistic exam," said Senior Supt. Samuel Pagdilao Jr., Philippine National Police spokesperson. Police said the TMG operatives were roaming after fleeing suspected car thieves. The chase, which began in Quezon City Monday night, reached Lawton Street in Barangay Upper, Pasig City shortly after midnight yesterday.

Chavez, who was on his way home in Barangay Pinagbuhatan, was passing by the street at about the same time when the TMG operatives fired on his car. "They started to fire indiscriminately. They did not even flag me down," he told radio station dzBB.

Chavez said the shots were all concentrated on his side, shattering the window and hitting glass shards all over him. He said he sustained no dizzy spells despite his head bowed. In his surprise, the armed men no longer followed him. Chavez stepped at a gasoline station and saw his bodyguard "had three bullets." Wounded and his arms restraining flat, he managed to proceed to the Total Medical Center for treatment.

The TMG operatives, it later turned out, were after a group of car thieves onboard a silver Toyota Altis. Police later found the Altis which had been abandoned on Lanuza Street near corner C5.

The car thieves, it turned out, had commandeered a motorist Gadaut driver by Reies Fuentebella, to evade the police.

Fuentebella said the suspects left him with his car when they reached Lewelyn Street in Pasig City, near De La Salle University.

With Judge A. del Puerto

MRT operations were suspended temporarily as rescuers assume get Christopher Abdula off the top of Guadalupe bridge.

By Dianne G. Lucas and Tarra V. Quismundo

THE METRO RAIL TRANSIT Corp. will evaluate security measures in all its facilities to prevent a repeat of yesterday's incident in which a passenger rendered disrupted rail service for 40 minutes.

In a telephone interview, MRTC public information officer Ronilo Bautista said they will focus on eliminating "security gaps" which allowed Christopher Abdula to scale a concrete column supporting the train system's rails above the Guadalupe bridge in Makati City.

MRT operations were halted for 40 minutes as engineers cut power to the overhead electrical lines, while rescuers and firemen attempted to secure Abdula.

The 33-year-old vendor, a Mandaluyong City resident, had climbed up the bridge at a few minutes after 7 a.m. to protest the seizure of his cart by enforcers of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA).

Abdula carried a placard with the message, "Hirap na hirap na kami, patuloy kaming binubugok (Life is already so hard but they keep on bringing us down)."

With five children in tow, Abdula was apparently frustrated that his cart and goods had been seized at least four times by MMDA enforcers, he added.

More than two hours later, Abdula willingly went down the steel bridge.

He was taken to the National Center for Mental Health in Mandaluyong to undergo psychiatric evaluation, rescuers said.

Gov't serious in smuggling campaign

AT LAST, THE GOVERNMENT has shown earnestness in its anti-smuggling campaign by arresting an alleged smuggler, Samuel Lee. The police Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) arrested Lee upon his arrival from Hong Kong and charged him with violation of the customs and Tariff Code. The CIDG also charged Lee with attempted bribery after he offered a P500,000 bribe to the arresting team. The Quezon City Prosecutor's Office, however, recommended Lee's release.

Whether he was released or not is not important. What is important is that Lee, considered untouchable at the piers and the "swing," the Bureau of Customs (BOC) term for taking out cargo without paying duties and taxes. Despite the exposé in this space, Lee and other smugglers still engaged in "swing." My exposé has alienated me from the person who my profession, I will choose the latter. Friends come and go but I will be in my profession for life.

* * *

Because of the drive against smuggling, the BOC has collected more revenues in the first two months of this year than in the same period last year.

'Village' tenant held for cabbie slay

By Jocelyn R. Uy

A RESIDENT OF AN EXCLUSIVE village in Muntinlupa City has been charged with robbery and homicide for allegedly killing a cab driver in his own yard. Jaclee Gallent, 38, was arrested on Wednesday on Sheville Street, Pershagan City, after leading policemen on a two-hour chase, city police chief Supt. Roberto Rosparillo said. Watchmen at Alabang Hills Village, where Gallent lives, said the suspect entered the subdivision on Sunday on board a taxi driven by Alberto Dacido. The guards later found Dacido's body in a vacant lot near Gallent's house. He had been shot once in the nape. The suspect, however, claimed that he left for a friend's house after the taxi driver had dropped him off at his home.

AN OPEN LETTER TO INFORMED READERS

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SPORTS

Pacquiao should fight Morales first–Roach

HERE HERALDS FIRST, THEN, PERHAPS, Marco Antonio Barrera

Renowned trainer Freddie Roach declared this yesterday just hours after World Boxing Council super featherweight champ Marco Antonio Barrera issued a challenge to Filipino superstar Manny Pacquiao.

Roach, in an interview with leading website Boxingtalk, indicated his displeasure over the timing of Barrera's feint, and even went further as to say Barrera wants Pacquiao's place at the top.

"Right now Barrera wants to be where Manny is, and that's on top. We have to give Erik Morales his opportunity as the current mayor," Roach said, referring to the Aztec. He don't watch between Pacquiao and Morales which was part of the contract they signed before their rematch last Jan. 21.

"If Erik chooses not to fight Manny then perhaps we look at Barrera," he added.

Roach also said there had been offers for Barrera to fight Pacquiao in the past for a grudge rematch, but the Mexican had always had a reason not to fight.

"Before Manny was where he is now, every time we tried to get a fight with Barrera, there was always a reason they didn't want the fight," Roach told Boxingtalk.

The Filipino had earlier stopped Barrera in the 11th round of a non-title match in November 2003.

Pacquiao is set to return to the ropers on March 12 from a vacation in Hong Kong together with his family. Salvio L. Lagarejos, contributor

ROACH

P'foods wins as Yap shines

GAME THROUGH (Ateneo Coliseum)
4:40 p.m.—Ola Lara Beatty vs Pentacost
7:30 p.m.—Talk 'N Text vs Barangay Ginebra

By Jane Manaoto

JAMES YAP FIRED A CAREER-HIGH 34 points to propel Purefoods Chunkee to a conference-opening 104-88 victory over Sta. Lucia Realty last night in the Ginebra Alaska-Air Beauty-PBA Philippine Cup at the Araneta Coliseum.

Criticized for a missed layup in the dying seconds of last conference's finals series, Yap acquitted himself by going 14-of-21 from the field, including 11 points in the third period that opened up an 81-62 spread for the Giants.

"Sir Paps responded to my challenge for him to score more," said Purefoods coach Ryan Gregorio. "This is his best game as a PBA player and he did what he can told to do magnificently."

Yap credited the shot that could have changed the complexion of the Giants' championship line-with 11 seconds left against Red Bull in the finals of Viola Pizza Conference Finals series.

Memories of that Game 4 disaster were wiped out partly because of Yap's breakout game and the Giants' confidence in running the break.

"We could be the smallest team in the league but the good thing about it is our readily recognize our weakness," said Gregorio. "We cannot battle other teams in a half-court game. We don't have the size so at least we should be quicker."

Veteran Jun Limpot replaced the injured Jun-Dax Salvador and finished with 12 points and eight rebounds in 31 minutes in complement fire-by Raymundo (16 points and 14 rebounds. Alex Pingris added 17 points for the Giants.

"From now on, this is the type of game that we have to play," said Gregorio. "Our challenge for us now is to go for up the conference semifinals."

Dennis Espino hit 21 points and had 13 rebounds for the Realtors, but Marlon Aquino was a scary night with seven points in 26 minutes.

The Realtors, who finished seventh in the Fiesta Conference after getting eliminated in the wild-card phase, got 15 points from Clarence Tolentino.

The scores:

Purefoods

PUREFOODS 104—Yap 34, Raymundo 18, Pingris 17, Limpot 12, Arnaiz II, Ilaw 6, Castillo 4, Tanuka 2, Hilario 2, Ayo 0, Evangelista 0.

STA. LUCIA REALTY 88—Espino 21, Tolentino 15, Aquino 7, Ochoa 7, Quinahan 6, Mendoza 5, Cabagnot 4, Ilustre 4, Quinain 3, Gallego 2, Aguilar 2, Cabanag 2, Agustin 0.

Quarters: 26-24, 49-38, 81-62, 104-88.

Austria returns to PBL

By Jasmine W. Payo

GEARING UP FOR A SMOOTH TRANSITION in the pro league, Rain or Shine yesterday appointed Leo Austria as head coach of its Fiesta Conference run in the Philippine Basketball League.

"I'm really honored with the trust given me," said Austria, who will also serve as head assistant of Welcoat Paints, which will be the franchise's fourth name when it debuts in the Philippine Basketball Association this October.

Rain or Shine will be donning the its seventh title when it plays its last conference in the Unity Cup starting March 25.

"I'll do everything in my capacity to give the team a fitting farewell in the league," noted Austria.

The 47-year-old mentor replaced Coley Gaccio, who agreed to step down as his assistant.

Austria is no stranger to the squad, having called the shots for the Painers from 2000 to 2004, which included a championship run in the 2003 Challenge Cup.

In 2004, Austria relinquished his post to Gaccio, also his assistant then, when he joined Quill as its head coach in the PBA.

Austria returned to Welcoat as head of basketball operations after Shell disbanded late last year.

But it would be a juggling act for Austria. Last November, Adamson University also tapped Austria to coach the Falcons in the coming UAAP season.

While Austria tries to wrap up Rain or Shine's PBL campaign, he will also be rebuilding a struggling collegiate team and forming a competitive prospect.

Tierro clinches Delhi slot

By Dennis U. Evan
Libre sports editor

TIERRO

MINDEE JOHN TIERRO, the country's top tennis lad-turned hotel boy Vardhan Pahuja, 7-6, 6-2, 6-2, in the first round of the Delhi Indian Institute of Tennis Professional International Tennis tournament Saturday recently in New Delhi.

The win enabled the 20-year-old Tierro to clinch a slot in the $25,000 New Delhi Masters main draw event.

Tierro earned round for is Ahmad Anqaree of India in the round of 16, jumped to No. 800 in the world.

Pilo in Iran, Tierro is now assured of getting ATP points which should enable the Filipino Davis Cupper to crack the world top 1,000 list.

To make it to the main draw, Tierro, who trains under Dreyang Imao at the Delhi Ria International Tennis Center, had to survive Indians Gir Sangal, 6-2, 6-2, and Dinesh Raj, 6-4, 7-6 (5), in the qualifying.

Among those competing in the tournament are round No. 203 and top seed Manoj Kulkarni of Kazakhstan, second seed and world No. 405 Ashutosh Singh of Australia and 3rd seed Vishnu Vardhan of India. Also competing Philipp Mathew, who is the Australian with an ATP ranking of 656, Kamalbeer Dahal Lippala of India (ATP No. 520) is the local favorite.

The Indian-Filipino Tierro won a gold medal as part of the men's team in the 23rd Southeast Asian Games last December.

Tierro has also qualified to the Masters of all three ATP/ITF Satellite events he has joined since 2004.

Backed up by Cebuano Olympian Frank Lozanes, countryman Jose Rene Lindbo and Phlia president Ahmad Mita, Tierro's campaign is part of the five-year developmental plan mapped out by Elnas.

Pacquiao named Boxer of the Year

PACQUIAO

SENATOR MANNY PACQUIAO bests Filipino world and international titleholders in the Ring magazine of Champions during the 6th Gabriel "Flash" Elorde Memorial Awards on March 25 at the Dusit Hotel Nikko.

Pacquiao, whose win over Oscar Mosquea in September last year gave him worldwide fame, will receive the Boxer of the Year award for the fifth time.

The Elorde Memorial Awards is presented by Johnny Elorde Management International and the Gabriel "Flash" Elorde Foundation.

The Elorde clan, led by Elorde's wife, Lanna, will be on hand to present the various awards. Daughters-in-law Lito Elorde is overseeing the event honoring the former world champion.

The event is sponsored by Philippine Investment and Gaming Corp., Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, Family Dollar, Mirabel, Smart, San Miguel Corp., Casa Beltran Pastel, Johnson & Johnson, Bai & Mg Party Favors and Manila Sports Center.

Arrows level with Doves

THE ATENEO UNIVERSITY Lady Eagles Arrows thwarted the St. Francis of Assisi Doves, 81-76, yesterday to force a deciding Game 3 for the UAAP National Capital Region title. Ateneo dominates men's basketball tournament with 4 championships

Allie Manabat hit a layup with 13.7 seconds left, allowing the Flaming Arrows to stay out of trouble and overtime series with the Doves at 1-1.

Marrinet's basket gave the Flaming Arrows a seven-point cushion at 80-73 and frustrated the Doves' bid to clinch the crown outright via a 2-0 sweep.

Meanwhile, the Ateneo Lady Eagles bounced back from the Red Lions' Bailey Arrows' organized attacks and extra sweep with a 17-16 wrestle which gave them the NCRAA junior crown.

NOAH Morales (Car 34) struggles to ward off Ely Hurendag in the morning race. But his consistency eventually rewarded Morales with a sweep and the Group 1 crown of the recent Philippine Touring Car Championship 2005.

Morales rules Group 3

NEIL—ROMAN MORALES OF Shift Racing pulled off a sweep and ruled Group 3 recently in the Philippine Touring Car Championship 2005 at the Subic International Raceway.

Morales pushed the Suzuki Swift Gti 1.3 (4-S) to pull away early from the pack en route to his victory in the event sanctioned by the governing Automobile Association of the Philippines.

He won 10 of the 12 races for a total of 272 points. In the coming season late April, he will be elevated to the Group 1 category along with the flagship like Jody Cumming, Ilocos and Louis Ramirez.

Budget approval key for Palaro 06

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE PALAROS FORMATION IN SAGA CITY IS fixed this May is in danger of being scrapped unless the 2006 national budget is approved.

The expenses for staging the Palaro, scattered to be from P20 million to P30 million, are embedded in the budget proposal of the upcoming Department of Education which is now being tackled by Congress.

Rep. Moreno Pantoncello, one of the proponents of an increased budget in sports, said everything depends on the bicameral hearing late this month.

The Palaro, featuring high school and elementary athletes from the public schools, has a long history of getting shelved due to monetary constraints. The event was shelved the last time in 2002 when the money, coming from then organizer Philippine Sports Commission, was diverted to the country's campaign in the Busan Asian Games.

Pantoncello said he discussed the Palaro budget this year during a meeting with Deputy Secretary Fe Hidalgo two weeks ago and again in Congress last Wednesday.

"If the Palaro is in their proposed budget being presented in Congress now," said Pantoncello, "if we pass the new budget it's included there. Deputies when we approve it. But I'm optimistic we'll pass the new budget with the support of the leaders."

Palaro regional coordinator Leo Toledo expressed confidence the event would be held this year because there's no need to spend on infrastructure as the Baga City Sports Complex has been kept in good shape.

He also noted that the Philippine Sinosurance and Gaming Corp. spent for the 2005 Palaro in Iloilo last year and this could be done again this year.

The PSC itself is bracing for harder times with the Department of Budget and Management proposing only a P20-million budget this year.

Paragua-Dableo title showdown

SAN FERNANDO CITY, LA UNION—Grandmaster Mark Paragua beat defending champion GM Jose Antonio, 3.5-0.5, Wednesday to achieve a title clash with fellow bubbly International Master Ronald Dableo in the fifth Le Floon Opera Chess Championships at the Diego Silang Hall of the La Union Provincial Capitol Building here.

The top-seeded Paragua downed Antonio after 45 moves of a Sicilian Opening in Game 1 and held Dableo to a Queen's Gambit draw in Game 2 after 31 moves of a Sicilian Defense to pave a 1.5-0.5 victory.

Dableo, on the other hand, bested IM Rolando Bitoon, 3.5-1.5 to beat Bitoon to Game 4 after 26 moves of an English Opening. He yielded Game 2 after 46 moves of a French Defense to draw Bitoon in the fifth round.

Bitoon took a 1-0 lead in the seven-man, plus three seconds increment playoff, but Dableo outmaneuvered his adversary in Game 2.

Dableo, based south of University of Iloilo, Tomas, won the toss coin and chooses the white pieces for the last six-rounder which he won. **MM Marlon Bernardino**

What else is new?

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

THINGS IN THE PHONE TO SET IT'S ABS-CBN and not Solar that will air Manny Pacquiao's next fight. I also read that Manny Pacquiao will now promote his next fight himself, having reportedly fired his ES promoter, Gary Shaw.

If all that is true, well, what can I say?

Breaking's news there.

Old song.

New faces, new faces.

New players, new bakes.

In short, what else is new?

It happens all the time, didn't I tell you?

How many managers has Manny Pacquiao dumped? Who? Jinky? Bell, there's Rolling Cortes and Rebot Elorde. You must name more? Bud Sarmiento. Ahmad Muhammad.

In boxing, the guy next to you can go anytime. Hardly do you see lasting friendships here. Emotions are non-existent, only egos. Money is the motive you see such things, such poignant scenes, happening, as in the films "The Cinderella Man" and "A Million Dollar Baby".

In boxing, anything can happen. What's said now, what's agreed upon today can change in a day or two. There's nothing ethical in boxing, only the color of money. It is only in this sport that relationships and agreements are shattered faster than champion mercenaries.

In boxing, whatever you sleep with one a dozen a dozen. They smell like rats in the dark, smacking with ferocity at the slightest opportunity. Or have you forgotten what Jimmy Cannon said, "Boxing is the red light district of sports."

Boxers are a special breed in that they change managers faster than Maria Ilhoza does changes clothes.

Purpose: dumping Cortes for Sarmiento, later, dropping Sarmiento for an American oddly named Shelley Finkel.

I'd rather leaving his discovery, promoter and "father," Rudy Salud, after just one trip to America.

Prince Cobi deserting Gus Abiol, his benefactor for years, for yet another American manager.

And see, who can forget Loisito Espinosa going to Joe Bananin after being with Hermie Ilarina since his teenage days?

And now this, the pieces touching such Asian figures, which had raised his last four fights, in favor of ABS-CBN.

Oh, well, don't tell me it can't be. It's true because boxing is not totally peopled by heroes but more by pimps.

And I'm just being honest when I say that.

KEEP ON PUNCHING, SUBIC Bay. I glad finally failed, the most colorful PBA commissioner since Leo Prieto, is fast recovering from a severe heart surgery a while back. Dacey he has been confined on the ICU. Thank God Rudy is now out of danger and is recuperating at home. See you soon, Awang Montes! I miss our coffee sessions at Dad-dawa along T. Morato in Quezon City.

I'm looking forward to covering the 7th Japan Grand Prize Golf Invitational at the Elms on March 15-17. The tournament is unique in that it is the only golf invitational in the country that runs for three days, and under among its participants some of the most prominent and accomplished businessmen in the Philippines and economy.

I look forward to meeting again Willie Sinang, Mr. Japanese himself when the broke behind the outer limbs (no!). Willie has always been a delight to be with, not only on the fairways but off it, for his no-nail-business and conversations filled with warmth.

Look who awaits the team champion in this tournament: it aims in the 23rd Japan World Golf Finals in Gleneagles, Scotland, on Aug. 11 to 13, 2006, where they will compete against other champion teams from the various Japan chambers from around the world.

Its having a handicap not, Imelda Japan is qualifying me to join the tournament.

* * *

BIRTHDAY. Belated happy birthday yesterday, March 8 to Robert "The Big J" Jaworski and Dr. Filomena del Carmen. Who doesn't know The Big J? Dr. Del Carmen is the 83-year-old father of Ombay, my ex-women's tennis golfmate. Cheers!

SPORTSWATCH

CDO Rapids tangle with Iligan

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY — The UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (USTCDO) Rapids will host the Iligan City Dragons in the Region 10 leg of the Mayor's Cup basketball tournament at the Xavier University Gymnasium here on Saturday.

Arcilla, Anasta in Kobe Gakuin Cup

MANILA, Philippines — Former Philippine Basketball Association (PBA) rookie of the year Jeffrey Arcilla and Filipino-Japanese player Ryusei Anasta will spearhead the Philippine Basketball Association (PBA) All-Star squad in the Kobe Gakuin Cup basketball tournament in Japan.

Infusion basketball boosts Spalding

MANILA, Philippines — Spalding, the world's leading sporting goods brand, is set to bring basketball — one of the most popular sports in the world — to a higher level of excellence with the launch of the Infusion basketball.

Largahan derby weigh-in tomorrow

The weigh-in for the Largahan derby will be held tomorrow at 10 a.m. at the Manila Jockey Club.

DIMAGIBA! Dianne does the ceremonial serve of Hunters' The Lone Hunk and her Game Pi Hunk teammates held recently at the Barangay Bubukan Arcade in Quezon City. With him are Albert Lee (left) and Gilbert Chua.

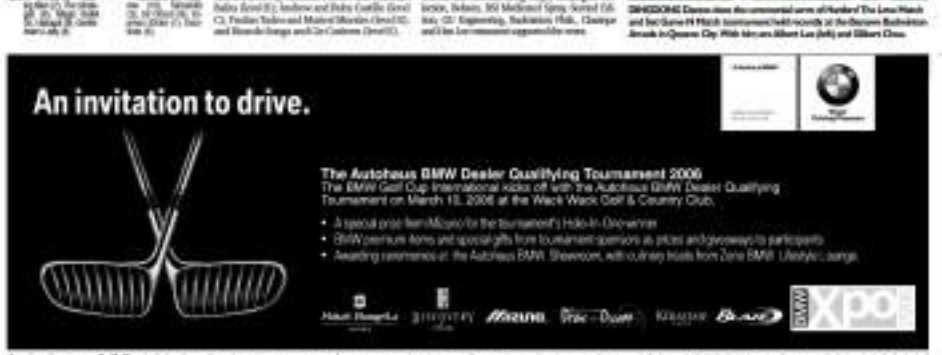
Dimarucot-Villanueva tops doubles

BY TOP SEEDS

LENIEN DIMARUCOT AND GABRIEL VILLANUEVA topped the men's doubles field A to lead other winners in the event Hunters' The Lone Hunk and Sir Lenie 9 Hunk badminton tournament at the Barangay Bubukan Arcade in Quezon City.

The other champions were Justin Reyes and Jonathan Jay Jovel II (Chocolate Hunks), Benjamin Jovel (3), Alejandro Hernando and Jaime Lagan Jovel (3), Carlo Bautista and Kevin Suarez (Jovel 12), Wilfred Pina and Jonathan Chico (mixed doubles Jovel A), Rommel Pascual and Christian Bailey Jovel II (), Andrew and Ricky Castillo (Jovel C), Emilio Tadeo and Medard Montes (Jovel D), and Rhondo Ibanga and Cris Cardenas (Jovel E).

Music and television actor Dingdong Dantay, who also plays badminton and is an image stud of endorser of Hunters, did the ceremonial serve with Albert Lee, managing director of Barangay Bubukan Arcade, and Gilbert Chua, CEO of Capitalist Inc., the exclusive distributor of Tiger Rackets and Hunters in the Philippines. The two-day tourney attracted 200 fans. Fleet Rackets and Shuttlecocks, Head Sniper Production Ads Co., National Marks Packaging and Industrial Product Corp., Philippine Chemical and Manufacturing Corp., Berlinger's Golf Service, Bolsters, 365 Medicated Spray, Scored Golf Inc., GU Engineering, Badminton Hub, Clamper and Ellen Entertainment supported the event.



WORLD BASEBALL CLASSIC

US trips Mexico; Puerto Rico, D. Republic score

PHOENIX—DERMIDE LEE AND TURNER [illegible] homered, Jake Peavy and six US relievers combined on a four-hitter and the United States beat Mexico 2-0 Tuesday.

Lee connected off starter Rodrigo Lopez and Jones homered on the first pitch he saw in the tournament—off Victor Villarreal in the seventh.

That was plenty of offense for the pitching-rich United States team.

Peavy allowed one hit—an infield single by Ramon Garcia to start the game. The 24-year-old San Diego Padres right-hander struck out three, throwing just 23 pitches.

Mike Trezke, Chad Cordero, Dan Wheeler, Todd Jones, Joe Nathan and Brad Lidge each threw an inning of relief for the US squad, which has 11 strikeouts on its seam.

The US pitchers contributed for nine strikeouts and no walks, shutting out Mexico in 3 hours, 6 minutes.

In Kissimmee, Florida, Darrell Rasner and Adriany Ortiz each homered in relief, leading the powerful Dominican Republic to an 11-5 victory over Venezuela in the opening game of Pool B, a tough grouping that also includes Australia and Italy.

Ramón Ortiz, the 2005 American League Cy Young pitching award winner for the Los Angeles Angels, pitched three scoreless innings for the win before leaving after 50 pitches—well below the opening round limit of 65.

In San Juan, Puerto Rico, Bernie Williams hit a tiebreaking single, after Jose Santiago and Puerto Rico opened the World Baseball Classic with a 2-1 upset over Panama.

Javier Vazquez got help from Jim Edmonds, and Williams' single up the middle scored Alex Cintron in the fifth inning to give Puerto Rico offered before a home crowd of more than 19,000 at the Hiram Bithorn Stadium. AP

Yao keys Rockets' triumph

MINNEAPOLIS—WITH Yao Ming emerging as an offensive force, the Houston Rockets didn't need superstar forward Tracy McGrady on Tuesday.

Yao topped 20 points for the eighth straight game, scoring 30 points and grabbing 13 rebounds to lead the Rockets to a 93-87 victory over the Minnesota Timberwolves.

With McGrady on the bench again with back problems, Yao dominated the paint and Juwanda Swift added 11 points and nine boards off the bench for Houston, which raised a 12-4 run to start the fourth quarter to get their third straight victory.

"Without McGrady our record is pretty poor," Yao said of the Rockets' 2-13 mark without their star forward. "Today's today-we took bad care. I really feel a lot of pressure because every teammates look to me and my opponent because as one, double team a lot, but we're here, there's no way back."

In other games it was: New York 107, Indiana 92; Boston 114, Washington 113, OT; Atlanta 113, Golden State 106; Cleveland 106, Toronto 99; Chicago 95, New Jersey 87; Dallas 93, Portland 87; LA Clippers 98, San Antonio 85.

Devin Durant, coach only six of 17 shots, but scored 31 points and had 21 rebounds for the Timberwolves.

The Rockets again were without McGrady, their leading scorer at 24.6 points a game, after his lackadaisical back flared up in Monday's game against Portland.

But his team-mates compensated, controlling his career-best streak of 20 plus points in style.

"I knew at least in the last five games, I'm not just completely done," said Yao. "Numbers like 20 [points] and 10 [rebounds], 20 and 10, double-double this every night."

LEBRON James scores on a drive in Cleveland's 104-99 victory over Toronto.

NBC welcomes Pangasinan

NATIONAL BASKETBALL COMMISSIONER (NBC) president Hubert "Tat" Pedilla officially welcomed Pangasinan Bombed bench scores 9 of the Philippine Columbian Association clubhouse.

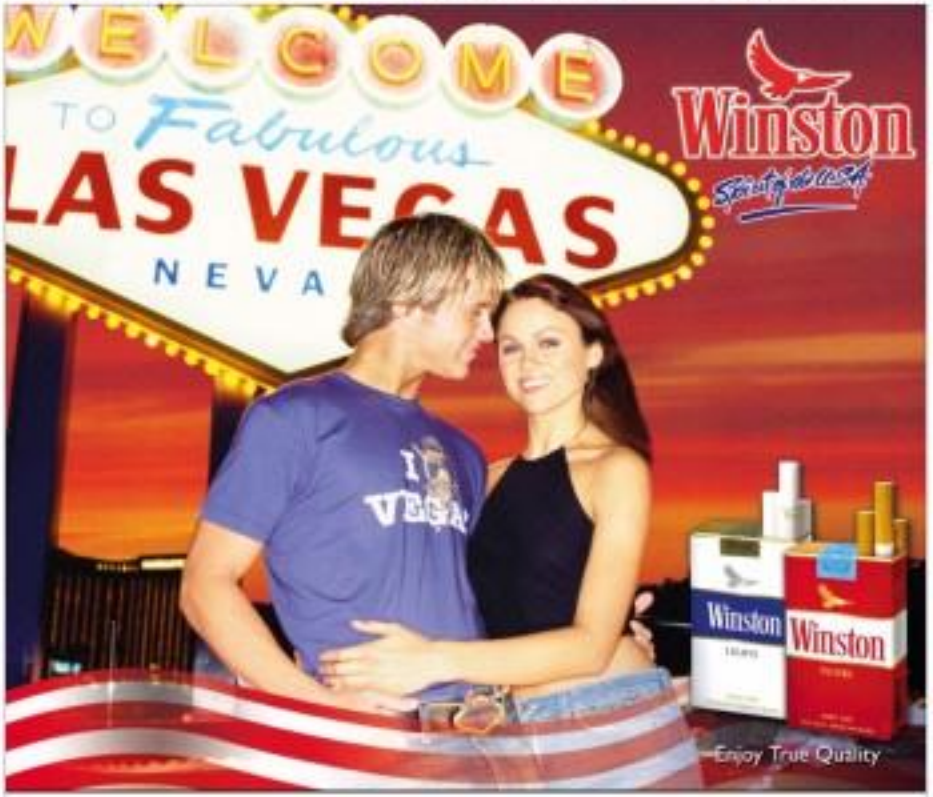
"We are very happy that your province has put up venues for the year's NBC tournament," Pedilla told Congressman Mark Cojuangco, Alcalde Espino and Cardinal Rosales, Alcantara City Mayor Nora Bragoza, Dagupan Vice Mayor Alex Fernandez and reporter Rosendo to after the opening opening.

Pedilla said Pangasinan's entry is a big boost to the credibility of NBC, which has been promoting regional basketball for three years now.

Mayor Bragoza, who initiated the move to join NBC, is optimistic that the expansion Pangasinan squad will be able to make a big impact in its first season.

"Pangasinan has produced a lot of good players," said Bragoza.

NBC PRESIDENT Nathaniel "Tat" Pedilla (third from left) and Alcantara City Mayor Norvard Bragoza shake hands after the contract signing joined by other Pangasinan and NBC officials.



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KATHERINE Luna and Coco Martin in "Masahista"

5 RP films among world's best in '05

By Rayvel San Diego Jr.

FOREIGN CRITICS HAVE RANKED five Filipino films among the best movies of 2005.

On the website Screen of Cinema, the critic "Ebolusyon ng Isang Pamilyang Pilipino" by Lav Diaz, "Idol," "Shookumentalia: Instruksi at Pasci" and "Ang Pagiging Kumbinsido ng Lupa" by Khavn de la Cruz, and "Masahista" by Brillante Mendoza appeared in a polls participated in by respected reviewers and which included such familiar titles as "2046" by Wong Kar-Wai, "Brokeback Mountain" by Ang Lee, "A History of Violence" by David Cronenberg and "The New World" by Terrence Malick.

The web site prides itself in being "an online journal devoted to the serious and esoteric dimension of cinema."

The 10-hour "Ebolusyon" was chosen by three contributing critics—Jeddy's Benito Bernardo, Antonio's Chitunjo Huber and Germany's Olaf Möller.

Eagerly awaited

Brother of the Mexican Cinematheque founder Lino Brocka's 1979 film "Tinimbang Ka Subalit Kulang" is a special retrospective for it "13 Discoveries."

Bernardo, a contributor to the newspaper El Mundonos and the magazine Cinebook, dubbed Diaz's three-hour sarcastic

100 | A2/3

Teri Onor stood up by TV pals

By Marinel R. Cruz

"I COULDN'T LOOK AT MY GUESTS IN THE eye. I couldn't tell them that some of the performers weren't showing up."

Comedian Teri Onor was telling reporters in-between sets on Tuesday how his 400 others his entire in the GMA 7 sitcom, "Lapit Ka, Iyanmong Eka," failed to turn up for his Feb. 28 show at the Gilmore Comedy Bar in Quezon City.

Teri said he had invited Mahal Connes, Benjie Paras and Raymart Santiago to drop by for "Lapit Ka, Iyanmong Eka sa Bayo mo," Zabala's anniversary presentation.

Mahal, Benjie, Raymart and Joey Marquez play Teri's brothers in "Lapit Ka."

"None of them came," Teri said. "Fortunately, the guests did not complain. But the guys phoned me as soon as they heard about the mix up and apologized. They said we were reminded them."

Teri said his manager, Jun Banila, sent word to Mahal, Benjie and Raymart three weeks before the show. "They all told me, 'Sir, we included [the] names in the publicity materials,'" said Teri.

In the end, it was Jimmy Santos, Jean Mercado and Wilfo—his co-hosts on the noontime show, "Sal Bilugal"—plus Maureen Larrazabal and stand-up comic Philip Lazatin "who came to my rescue," Teri said. "I will forever be grateful to them."

TEAR: Tony'ce apologized.

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Another housemate leaves PBB happily

By Nini Valera

PERFECT FOR PUBLICITY-SEEKING and rumored to only 13.5 percent of the total votes for "Pinoy Big Brother" celebrity housemate Christian Vasquez, the runaway was actually rooting for him.

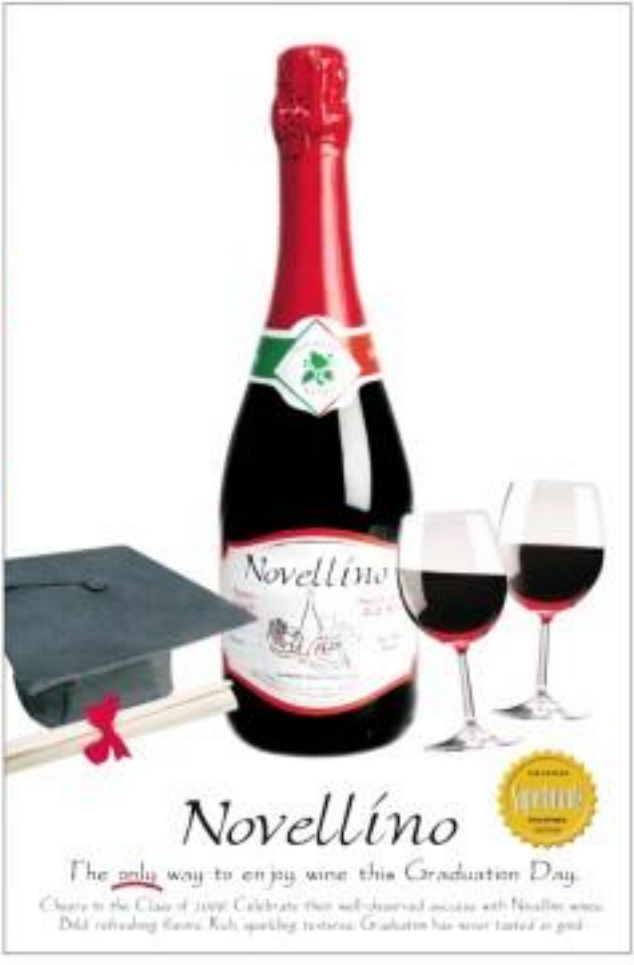
This was how this model/actor Perry Sanchez saw his eviction from Big Brother's house last weekend, after 39 days—the second housemate to get the boot.

When his nomination was announced a week before the eviction, Christian had asked viewers of the ABS-CBN reality show to decide whether he should stay or leave the house to be with his sons, Ryan and Martin.

"I guess the public wanted me to be reunited with my boys," Christian, 29, told boyanon Entertainment on Monday during his exit interview.

The actor is a single father; his wife left several years ago. The boys live with his parents in Ba-

ANOTHER A2/3



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10 BLOCKS
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YOURS, MINE & OURS
THE DARK
UNDERCLASS MAN
BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
FINAL DESTINATION 3
TIGER BLADE
CLOSE TO YOU

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CASANOVA
LAST HOLIDAY
THE DARK
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10 BLOCKS
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FEARLESS

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FEARLESS
10 BLOCKS
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EYESHA

SM CITY MARILAO

THE DARK
YOURS, MINE & OURS
BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
FINAL DESTINATION 3
FEARLESS
UNDERCLASS MAN
10 BLOCKS
CLOSE TO YOU
LAST HOLIDAY
MEAN FLUX
I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
MINDERS OF GEESHA

SM CITY STA. MESA

FEARLESS
THE DARK
CASANOVA
YOURS, MINE & OURS
10 BLOCKS
BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
FINAL DESTINATION 3
LAST HOLIDAY
CLOSE TO YOU
UNDERCLASS MAN

SM CITY BACOOR

10 BLOCKS
UNDERCLASS MAN
YOURS, MINE & OURS
FEARLESS

SM CITY SAN LAZARO

10 BLOCKS
FINAL DESTINATION 3
THE DARK
FEARLESS
CASANOVA
YOURS, MINE & OURS

SM CITY MASINAG

CASANOVA
FINAL DESTINATION 3
BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
THE DARK
YOURS, MINE & OURS
FEARLESS
UNDERCLASS MAN
LAST HOLIDAY
CLOSE TO YOU
PRIDE AND PREJUDICE
10 BLOCKS
TIGER BLADE

SM CITY BINONDO

CASANOVA
YOURS, MINE & OURS
RESERVED
10 BLOCKS
YOURS, MINE & OURS
UNDERCLASS MAN
LAST HOLIDAY
FINAL DESTINATION 3
THE DARK
RESERVED

SM CITY CLARK

FINAL DESTINATION 3
FEARLESS
RESERVED
YOURS, MINE & OURS

SM CITY SUCAT

YOURS, MINE & OURS
FEARLESS
10 BLOCKS
CLOSE TO YOU

EXCLUSIVE
FEARLESS
EXHIBIT

SM CITY MARILAO

FIREWALL
MEAN FLUX
FEARLESS
YOURS, MINE & OURS

BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
FEARLESS
CLOSE TO YOU
UNDERCLASS MAN

BLOODRAYNE
CLOSE TO YOU
MUNICH
PINK PANTHER

SM CITY BACOOR

FEARLESS
YOURS, MINE & OURS
FINAL DESTINATION 3
WALK THE LINE
CLOSE TO YOU

PINK PANTHER
DOA!
NEW WORLD
CLOSE TO YOU

SM CITY BICUTAN

10 BLOCKS
FEARLESS
UNDERCLASS MAN
FINAL DESTINATION 3

SM CITY SAN LAZARO

MEMORIES OF GEESHA
FEARLESS
10 BLOCKS
YOURS, MINE & OURS
EL ANGEL
NASAAN SI FRANCIS
CLOSE TO YOU
MEAN FLUX

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY DAVAO

YOURS, MINE & OUR
RESERVED
BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
FEARLESS
CLOSE TO YOU
NEW WORLD
RESERVED
NASAAN SI FRANCIS

SM CITY CEBU

FIREWALL
PROOF
CLOSE TO YOU
FEARLESS
YOURS, MINE & OURS
MEAN FLUX

SM CITY DAVAO

WALK THE LINE
FEARLESS
MEAN FLUX
FIREWALL

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SATURDAY - 8:00 PM

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"MARCH OF THE PENGUINS," Yves Circommissary Feature winner in this year's Oscars, will have a Tagalog version to be narrated by Sharon Cuneta and, to be released locally by United Mongrel Peninsula-Intel Ink versus in the English version. Apart from the original French, Luc Jacquet's documentary encompasses penguins also Iran's Chinese, Japanese, Finnish, Italian and Norwegian versions.

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SERGIO MENDES & BRASIL 2006
MARCH 18, SATURDAY - 8 p.m.

5 RP films . . .

From page A6-1

progress, "Moronlar"—which was previewed in Torino, Italy in November and is slated to premiere in Fribourg, Switzerland this month...as "the most eagerly awaited film of 2006."

Bernales also included "Manahimik" and "Isda" in his list of the year's best.

De la Cruz's other two films were chosen by Brazil's Jorge Oldaco ("Mundovisão") and Thailand's Ji Phokaew ("Patrolling Rimbinda").

"It was unexpected," Mendoza said of this latest honor. "It gives hopes."

De la Cruz, who first heard the news in Rotterdam, "the Netherlands to harmony, said this seasonal interest in Pinoy films at a sign "that the country is slowly going back on the map."

Humbling

From Rotterdam, De la Cruz proceeded to Clermont-Ferrand, France, where he won a international award in the laboratory-sponsored session late February. He reported that a 54-plus-show film competed in the narrative section—"this 'films' "Blood Mask," a Cinemalaya first Screenplay-Diaz winner last year.

"It's humbling," Star said of the accolade. "This is good for Philippine cinema." It's more than me paved, he added, because it means "that our country is once again being recognized as part of the discourse on world cinema."

The country's presence on the list is made all the more significant, he explained, because it is unhelped "that there is a young and dynamic movement of filmmakers in the country who are making movies for the art-theaters, not just for entertainment."

Miller wrote in the New York-based Film Comment magazine last year that Lav's "Shotgun Cinema" is "a labor of love" made "in the gaping of time and echoes overthrowing family across history's vast plains."

Another housemate leaves PBB house

From page A6-1

VASQUEZ

sided, while he is based in Manila, pursuing his show biz career.

"I feel more relaxed my now as much as when I was inside the [PBB] house," Christian admitted. "I usually am then only five times a year...Christmas, New Year, and birthdays. I should see them more often."

Ecstatic

The most important thing he learned from his stay, Christian said, was that "I took my freedom for granted when I should have used it to be a better father to my sons."

Dubbed Dash Daddy in the show, Christian was ecstatic when he left.

"I felt that...among the three of us who were nominated—Rico Robles and Ruston Padilla were the other two...they deserved to stay inside."

Another person who was delighted that Christian is out at last was his manager, Mikey Arboleda.

"I proved her that," Arboleda confided to his client-entertainment. "It was a very tense time for me just watching the events inside the house."

Mikey was referring to a period last week when Robin Padilla stormed into the house and confronted Christian who, he thought, had been teasing his brother, Ruston. Prior to that, Ruston had admitted to friends thrown before millions of viewers that he was in "love" with Christian and that he was gay.

Annoyed

"At first I did not understand what Robin was saying," Christian said. "But when I told him that I admired his brother very much because of his courage, he (Robin) understood."

After viewing mentioned footages of the 24/7 action inside the house, Robin discovered that the scene he had been shown...Christian in boxer shorts, aping a macho dancer...happened before Ruston's coming out.

Mikey wondered "If he weren't Robin, would they have shown him the tapes?"

So how did 'Brokeback' lose?

NEW YORK—WE ASKED ABOUT IT, argued about it, spoofed it. "Brokeback Mountain" was everywhere in our popular culture—and it lost the big Oscar it was supposed to win.

After Jack Nicholson announced "Crash" as Best Picture at the conclusion of the Academy Awards on Sunday, he shrugged his shoulders as if to say, "Don't look at me."

Was it a "Broke-backlash," or was "Crash" just the worthy contender in the final scrum? There are as many theories as there are "Brokeback" parodies on the Net.

One theory is that, despite the hoopla, Academy voters didn't really love the saga of two gay cowboys. "Sometimes people pretend to like movies more than they actually do," said Richard Walter, head of the screenwriting program at the University of California, Los Angeles Film School.

Critic Kenneth Turan, writing in the Los Angeles Times, said the movie "made people distinctly uncomfortable." He added: "In the privacy of the voting booth ... people are free to act out the unspoken fears and ... prejudices that they would never broadcast to another soul, or acknowledge to themselves. The pros, that setting out doomed 'Brokeback Mountain'."

Beyond accolades

Gay activists did not necessarily agree.

Joe Solmonese, president of the Human Rights Campaign, the largest US gay rights group, said: "I was certainly disappointed. But I would trade that Oscar for all the positive conversations that this movie spurred between parents and their gay children, or between employers and their gay co-workers. That impact transcends accolades."

Some focused on the typical Academy voter: older, and city-dwelling. Author and "Brokeback" co-screenwriter Larry McMurtry thought that was key to his film's loss: "Ink are an urban matter."

McMurtry could have added that not only are Academy voters urban, they are from Los Angeles—the heart of "Crash," a racial drama depicting the interwining experiences of an array of characters over 36 hours.

"Brokeback" director Ang Lee, who won the directing prize, said he hadn't a clue why his film lost.

"Crash" came out in limited release in May, much too early for a film to stay in voters' minds. But Lionsgate Films reminded voters and critics of the film's potency by flooding them with DVD copies in late 2005.

So what is to be learned from Sunday night's upset result? Not much, says Walter, the film professor. He can really never know what Academy voters are getting to do."

—Jocelyn Noveck, AP

ROUNDUP

Mom, are you gay?

NEW YORK—Madonna says she had some explaining to do when her daughter, Lourdes, asked about the kiss

MADONNA

with Britney Spears at the 2003 MTV Video Music Awards.

"Lourdes[sic] is totally obsessed with who is gay," says Madonna in an interview in Out magazine's April issue. "She even asked, 'Mom, you know they say that you are gay?' And I'm, 'Oh, do they? Why?' And she says, 'Because you kissed Britney Spears.' And I said, 'No, it just means I kissed Britney Spears. I am the mommy pop star and she is the baby pop star. And I am kissing her to pass my energy on to her.'"

Madonna, 47, famously locked lips with Spears, 24, while performing her song "Like a Virgin" and "Hollywood" at the awards ceremony.

The pop diva, considered by some to be an icon in the gay community, tells the magazine her 9-year-old daughter likes to guess who is gay: "Oh, and the other thing she likes to do when we go out, she says, 'Mom, do you want me to point out who the gay men are?' And I say, 'Okay, but I think I already know.'" AP

New GMA 7 trilogy

"PEKEE," a trilogy featuring GMA 7 artists, will premiere tomorrow, 7 p.m., at the Cinema 2 of Robinsons Galleria Movieworld.

RYZA Cenon

The digital film is the product of an acting workshop attended by GMA artist Center talents. The five movies, "Itchie," written and directed by Rahyan Carlos, tells of how the families of Edwin and Thony are wheelchair to drive them apart. It stars Mark Herras, Ryza Cenon and Lz Reyes, with guests Robert Seña and Jaya Severino.

"Tikbo," written by Rahyan Carlos and directed by Jonie Tapanis, recounts how the life of timid, victim of domestic violence, changes after joining a support group and meeting others like himself. Mike Tan, MC Muntinlupa and Chanda Romero star.

"Last and Found," a collaboration of father and sons Peque and Wanggo Gallaga, is a quirky comedy about missing persons and the strange things you discover about people close to you during difficult times. Lead stars are CJ Muere and Michael Garcia.

Ang Lee's praise

HOLLYWOOD—Oscar-winning "Brokeback Mountain" director Ang Lee has hailed Australia's Heath Ledger's performance as a gay cowboy in the film as a "miracle" of acting.

Taiwanese-born Lee, 51, sung the praises of the 26-year-old who lost out on the Best Actor Oscar to American star Philip Seymour Hoffman, who won for "Capote," during an interview following Sunday's Academy Awards.

ANG Lee

"It's not only remarkable, it's almost like a miracle," Lee said. A lot of people told me that his performance reminds them of a young Brando. It's just astounding."

He said Hoffman's victory did not diminish in any way Heath Ledger's performance. "He did a marvelous, marvelous, miraculous performance, in original."

The director said he had not seen Ledger since he lost out on his first big chance at Oscar gold.

But Lee said that when he did see Ledger, possibly at an Oscars after party, "I will hug him. I will praise him. I will tell him what he meant to my mind." AFP

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2 16 BLOCKS	7 FEARLESS
3 THE LAST HOLIDAY	8 THE DARK
4 DATE MOVIE	9 KEYS TO THE KDEDE
5 CASANOVA	10 UNDERCLASS MAN

ERMITA

1 16 BLOCKS	
2 UNDERCLASS MAN	5 THE DARK
3 THE LAST HOLIDAY	6 CASANOVA
4 DATE MOVIE	7 YOURS, MINE AND OURS

METRO EAST

1 DATE MOVIE	5 YOURS, MINE AND OURS
2 UNDERCLASS MAN	6 16 BLOCKS
3 THE LAST HOLIDAY	7 THE DARK
4 CASANOVA	8 FEARLESS

NOVALICHES

1 DATE MOVIE	4 YOURS, MINE AND OURS
2 FEARLESS	5 16 BLOCKS
3 CASANOVA	6 UNDERCLASS MAN

CITISQUARE MALABON **PIONEER**

1 DATE MOVIE	1 DATE MOVIE
2 BLOODRAYNE	2 THE DARK
3 RESERVE	3 16 BLOCKS
4 RESERVE	4 YOURS, MINE AND OURS

STA. ROSA **LIPA**

1 DATE MOVIE	1 NEW WORLD
2 FEARLESS	2 FEARLESS
3 YOURS, MINE AND OURS	3 PINK PANTHER
4 MURDER	4 BASAAN SI FRANCISI
5 FINAL DESTINATION 3	

DASMARINAS **ANGELES**

1 16 BLOCKS	1 ASON FLEX
2 SYRIANA	2 YOURS, MINE AND OURS
3 YOURS, MINE AND OURS	3 DATE MOVIE
4 PRIDE AND PREJUDICE	4 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN
5 BASAAN SI FRANCISI	

IMUS **STARMILLS**

1 DATE MOVIE	1 DATE MOVIE
2 YOURS, MINE AND OURS	2 FEARLESS
3 16 BLOCKS	3 YOURS, MINE AND OURS
4 PRIDE AND PREJUDICE	4 FINAL DESTINATION 3
5 BASAAN SI FRANCISI	5 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN
	6 PRIDE AND PREJUDICE

BACOLOD **ILOILO**

1 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE 2	1 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE 2
2 FEARLESS	2 FEARLESS
3 YOURS, MINE AND OURS	3 YOURS, MINE AND OURS
4 ASON FLEX	4 MURDER
5 UNDERWORLD	5 NEW WORLD
6 BASAAN SI FRANCISI	6 BASAAN SI FRANCISI

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Filipino talents stand out abroad

WE RECENTLY CALLED THE FINALS OF THE reality-show search, "So You Think You Can Dance" on ABC3, and noted the Hi-Arn finalist Melody Lacuesta, who was narrowly beaten by top winner Nick Lazzarini.

Even if she ended up only in second place, Melody was always one with her profound virtuosity, great personality and love for dancing.

Melody's dancing career is the United States is now a matching, but she should come to the Philippines as soon as she can, to star in a TV special there.

Pinay pride should make that show a hit, after which she should be asked to host a dance show on TV.

After Stephanie Reeves left us, the local TV scene has been unanimously looking for a great dancer to exploit a dance program—and Melody is it.

Another Filipino talent poised to make his mark internationally is Mon Confiel. He's been chosen among over 100 singers from 23 countries as one of the 12 semifinalists competing in the London International Jazz Competition for vocalists on March 18.

Six singers will survive that leg of competition, and vie for top honors on March 22 at Cadogan Hall in Chelsea. Our hunch is that Mon will do well in the competition...as another international Filipino singing star should be in town.

Finally, kudos to Hi-Arn hunks Cheryl Bautista Bustle for successfully teaming up with Drew Lastary of 98 Degrees to victory in the popular "Dancing with the Stars" competition on ABC TV in the States.

Performance factors aside, the winning pair was boosted by the many votes called in by supportive Filipinos in the US.

Melody and Cheryl should fly to Manila as soon as possible to further enhance their careers, and to enliven the Broadway dance scene here.

As for Mon, he doesn't need a victory to indicate to convince his supporters here that his talent is of international caliber, as all he needs to do is be very busy!

Note that, in the past, standout Filipino performers tended to be singers, thanks to hit showcases like "Miss Saigon." Those days, however, Hi-Arn talents like Melody and Cheryl are making it as dancers.

This has been a long time in coming because Pinoys are as good at dancing as they are at singing. Fact is, our dancers started making waves about 50 years ago, when the legendary Dance Company duo performed to great ovations on Broadway. And, in the '70s, Bob Fosse's hit dancer musical, "Chicago" had sultry young Filipina Cynthia Rothlo among its prodigiously talented solo performers.

Well, Melody and Cheryl can now carry the torch from where they left off, and help establish the Philippines as the veritable all-singing and all-dancing capital of the world!

Siti

Beautiful foreign singer and songwriting artist Siti performs every Friday night at Streamhouse on E. Rodriguez Ave., QC. Her debut album, "Coffeehouse," is distributed by Warner and is available at leading music stores. The album has 10 tracks of contemporary songs and pop and jazz standards, rendered in Siti's signature cool, bossa style.

VIEWFINDER

Amirar U. Xuero

Here's a dancer that local TV needs

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BY JERRY SCOTT

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ATOMIC MEDI WEEDY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: Because you have the ability to think ahead, you take a good sense of strategy about life. You're genuine and expect others to be honest. You trust your instincts. You like family, yet you want to be free to travel. This year a phase of your life will end to make room for something new to begin.
Birthdates of: Mickey Spillane, author; Yul Gagarin, cosmonaut; Jolinda Greene, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You can be a big help. There's a good chance that someone else will do a sweet favor for you. You might even receive a gift or a lucky love someone.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): This is a wonderful day to enjoy being with people or friends. People are friendly, warm and ready to have a good time. Get into the spirit of things!

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): This is a productive day at work. Bosses are impressed by you. People are easy to work with. What more could you want?

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You suddenly have a wonderful opportunity to travel, make travel plans or do something connected with education and publishing. By all means, jump on this!

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Opportunities are good for you today, which makes you happy. You're in a position to enjoy the resources and wealth of others. (When Lady Luck smiles on you, just smile back.)

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Wonderful feelings of peace and harmony with others make this a pleasant day for you. Take time to enjoy yourself with others. It's good to collaborate joy.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): This is a good time to ask for whatever you want at work. You just might get it! You have foresight and the ability to see into the future today. Use this!

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Some days we have to work hard; some days we can get by. This is a pretty day for your sign! Enjoy yourself with others, friends and romantic interests.

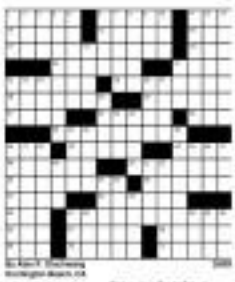
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Today the Sun and Mercury are forming with your ruler, Jupiter. It's a good day to make real estate deals, or buy anything for your home or a family member.

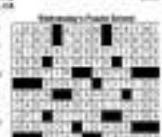
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You're very eager for new experiences today. Great! Try out whatever comes to you or anything that arouses your mind. It will be fun and educational.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): This is a great day for business and financial matters. You might not feel like working very hard, but whatever you do could generate more money for you.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You have much subtlety and flavor of mind today, you easily can take stock of what you are doing. You see how to make changes in the future that will make you better and happier.

DAILY CROSSWORD





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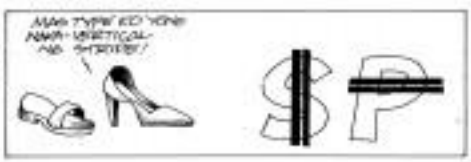

Heath pursues fun, women in new film

By Oliver H. Palumbarit
Contributor

HEATH LEDGER TRAVELS TO the past once again, and this time he's a free-loving cowgirl man in "Casanova," the lustful tales of his celebrated gay cowboy in "Brokeback Mountain."

REVIEW

Secret

A supposedly secret chapter in the life of the big-century lothario Giacomo Casanova is told in this light but charming comedy that further illustrates the versatility of Swedish director Lasse Hallstrom ("The Shipping News," "Chocolat"). Shot in Venice, the film is a lavishly promissed period piece that reimagines the lecentioned divinity and chaos of the 1700s.

Casanova's romantic exploits have become mythical by this time, as practically every hot-blooded heterosexual woman has ordered taken to tell about true love (AKA the ultra-schoolgirl). The narrative details the mysterious climate of the time, but also happily unveils the sex lives of many of history's citizens, including madame diorge Sand. But Casanova embarks on a new quest, which is to take the love of one woman who will ultimately be his wife.

Flirting nicely in the role of energetic Francesca Bruni is Sienna Miller, who has made numerous more headlines in recent months because of her love life. But the newcomer's real romantic entanglements aside, Miller as the free-thinking, rebellious Francesca is quite refreshing, as skilled with the sword as she is with words. Francesca catches the eye of the damned Casanova, who isn't beyond stealing another person's identity just to improve his.

Subtle

Tightly forming a subtle comedic rapport with the pair are some familiar and spellbinding actors. Jeremy Irons, portraying a bumbling inquisitor trailing Casanova, is especially delightful. Leisa Olin, perhaps best known for her super-spy role in the TV series "Alias," is impressively endearing as Francesca's dizzy mother, Oliver Platt, as a wealthy man who will accept issues, adds deadpan humor to the ensemble discourse.

She vividly molded characters owe much to the script, which is not always as sharp as it could be. Casanova's dialogue is often too modern, and the film's pacing is sometimes sluggish. Despite these flaws, Casanova is a fun, frothy romp that's worth a look.

ALL-WOMAN SHOW: Miller is Heath Ledger's paramour in "Casanova."

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AT THE CINEMAS

G1	1 DATE MOVIE	2 16 BLOCKS	3 GRIDIRON GANG	4 THE DARK				
G4	1 CASANOVA	2 YOURS, MINE & OURS	3? 16 BLOCKS					
	4 CAPOTE	5 FEARLESS	6 DATE MOVIE	7 LAST HOLIDAY				
GB1	1 DATE MOVIE		2 CASANOVA					
GB3	1? DATE MOVIE		2? 16 BLOCKS					
	3 LAST HOLIDAY	4 YOURS, MINE & OURS	5 CASANOVA					
ATC	1? 16 BLOCKS		2 CASANOVA					
	3 DATE MOVIE	4 LAST HOLIDAY	5 YOURS, MINE & OURS					
ACC	1 16 BLOCKS	2 DATE MOVIE	3 YOURS, MINE & OURS	4 ice breaker				
M2	1 16 BLOCKS		2 YOURS, MINE & OURS					
	3 GRIDIRON GANG	4 CASANOVA	5 DATE MOVIE					

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Strengthening peso worries Neda chief

SUBIC-TARLAC EXPRESSWAY SIGN. SCDA president and CEO Narciso Abaya (left) discusses the Subic-Clark-Tarlac corridor with Pampanga Gov. Mark Lapid before the Global Gateways Forum in Pampanga. The event culminated in the signing of a memorandum of support for the P3.7-bn project by 200 representatives from both national and local government units, NGOs the business sector and the academe. The P13-billion toll super highway is expected to be completed by the end of 2007.

BSP urged to intervene to keep rate above P50:$1

By Michelle V. Remo and Doris C. Dumlao

THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (Neda) has called on the government to keep the peso from appreciating further, saying an exchange rate stronger than 50 to a dollar would already be bad for the export sector and the economy as a whole.

Neda Director General Romulo Neri suggested that the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) intervene in the market to ensure the peso would not breach the 49.81 mark.

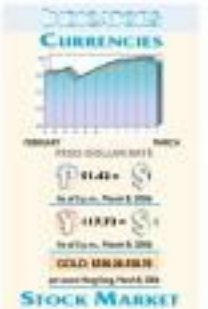
"An exchange rate of 51 or 52 (pesos to a dollar) is still sustainable, although exporters are already complaining. We should not let it strengthen below 50," Neri said yesterday in his first press briefing since being reassigned in the Neda last month.

He temporarily headed the Department of Budget and Management following the resignation of Emilia Boncodin. The budget department is now headed by former Rep. Rolando Andaya.

Neri said revenues of exporters from sectors depending heavily on imported raw materials such as electronics were not much affected. The strengthening value of the peso, which makes these products more costly and therefore less competitive, is offset by the decreasing cost of importing the raw materials.

But exporters who source their raw materials largely from the local market are adversely affected by the appreciation of the local currency. Net sold exporters of handicraft, furniture and semiconductor-based products were being threatened by

CONTINUED ON B2



STOCKS FELL FOR THE SECOND day yesterday as investors fretted over prospects of higher interest rates and talk of heavy selling by government financial institutions.

The benchmark 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index fell 221.42 points, or 1.1 percent, to 2,046.36, adding to its 1.2-percent loss Tuesday.

All subindexes retreated. Decliners outgained gainers 106 to 53, while 36 stocks were unchanged.

Ayala Land contributed to the decline, falling 4.1 percent to ₱10.26, possibly on worries over the adverse impact that high interest rates may have on the country's biggest property group by earnings, analysts said.

Globe Telecom fell 2 percent to ₱870 on combined profit-taking. Philex fell 1.7 percent to end at ₱4.45 on concern over its 2005 earnings results, which have yet to be released.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. rebounded after a weak showing for most of

STOCKS B2

IMF sees RP debt burden easing

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE INTERNATIONAL MONETARY Fund sees the Philippines cutting its external debt to 47.5 percent of gross domestic product over the next five years from 65.7 percent as of end-2005 if the government would stick to its fiscal-handling of fiscal reforms.

In a report issued by the IMF as part of regular consultations with the government, it said a scenario where reforms would proceed after the full implementation of the value-added tax would see the country's public-sector debt declining firmly.

This scenario assumes a primary fiscal deficit downward adjustment of 2.6 percentage points of GDP from 2005 to 2007 that would, in turn, improve investor confidence and induce higher private sector investment that would push up GDP growth to 5.3 percent.

Helping ease the fiscal deficit were the onshore rents, the IMF considered, would require additional fiscal measures after the VAT reform.

"Frontline reforms include the rationalization of tax incentives and taxing and indexing excise taxes," the IMF said.

A fiscal incentive rationalization bill had been filed in Congress but the IMF said even final passage recognized this would yield limited revenue in its present form.

WHAT'S INSIDE

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UAE lifts ban on RP processed meat exports B7

Vehicle sales growth slows due to higher VAT

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE GROWTH RATE OF MOTOR vehicle sales dropped to 2.1 percent in the first two months as prices increased due to the higher value-added tax and the upward trend in fuel prices, according to an industry report.

Local assemblers sold 13,748 units as of end-February compared to 13,338 units in the same period in 2005.

In a joint report, the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines (Campi) and the Truck Manufacturers Association (TMA) said political instability also dampened sales as consumers chose to defer their purchases.

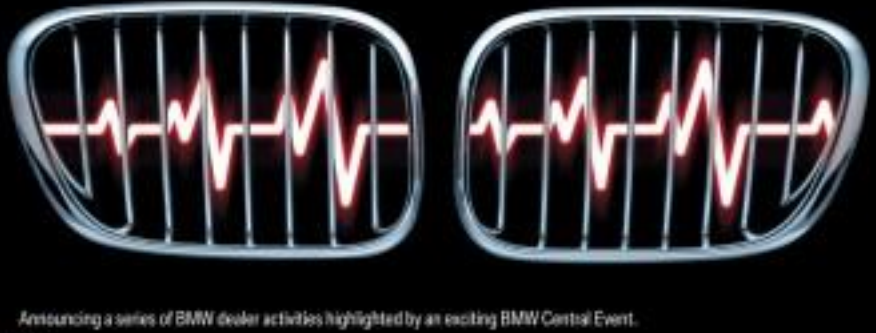
Still, the group said they expected sales to pick up again in March as it usually does every year.

Turnover of commercial vehicles mirrored the overall market performance as sales growth slowed to 4.7 percent in the first two months.

The low supply of some vehicle models also limited the increase in sales of heavy-utility vehicles, light commercial vehicles (LCVs), light

FINANCE B2

Adrenaline Rush.
The BMW Xpo Month.



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All authorized BMW Dealerships

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- 10% downpayment, 7 years financing on all BMW models
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BMW Xpo Central Event Activities
March 17 to 19, 2006
BMW Pavilion, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig

- New model introductions
- Chance to win a brand new BMW X3 for every 500 litres
- Surprise gifts for BMW Xpo Central Event visitors

BMW Xpo 2006

I could right a book

TO THE MILLIONS UPON MILLIONS OF working class members of the government-managed pension funds SSS and GSIS:

Just to reassure what's happening to your P20-billion "investment" in liquidity PCI Bank, the Go family—based on reports that did not come out in this newspaper—is making a comeback.

Before the Go family sold their shares in EPCIB to the SM group, all 31-year-old staff operation honcho Sy, and Sabin the Elder, had to do was sit down to take over the bank without spending another centavo, the Go family controlled EPCIB.

The beauty of it was, the Go family only owned 20 percent of the bank, while the GSIS/Soci owned more than 60 percent.

The same family arguably now wants the business back—but what the family should get EPCIB for 35 board seats of the bank.

Again, don't the same family that already sold out to the SM group, fill their nominees to the board subsequently resigned, yet they still want the EPCIB board seats?

* * *

All background, during the fight for control of the EPCIB board last year, the Go family asked the Supreme Court to rule that theirs was the legitimate board.

There were two boards at that time, with the Go family dominating one, and the coalition of GSIS/Soci/Ty Kian Ming/Ang Cho Sit/Lopez and Ty Ka Kong/Ty Ka Bun/Ty Ka Nam/Ty Ka Sing/Ty Ka Kong Foundation/Ty Ka Kong Foundation/Ty Ka Kong Foundation

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

AEV obtains P2.2B in loans

By Elizabeth L. Sandoval

ABOITIZ EQUITY VENTURES, the flagship firm of the Cebu-based Aboitiz family, recently got P2.2 billion worth of five-year loans from 8 of the Philippines' 10 largest banks and international financial institutions.

The loans will be used largely to finance new hydroelectric power projects.

AEV will build two hydroelectric power plants in Davao with a combined generation capacity of 70 megawatts. Construction will start in the first quarter next year, chief finance officer Stephen Paradies said.

AEV will form a joint venture with Norwegian partner SN Power Invest AS, which also bid for power generation assets to be auctioned off by National Power Corp.

AEV is interested in the 300-MW Bumbuna project and 112-MW Mansarayi plants in Sierra Leone. It is also planning to bid for the 180-MW Mapai plant in Liberia.

SN Power, AEV's partner, is engaged in developing and operating hydropower projects in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

AEV through unit Hydroelectric Development Corp. (Hedcor), is the country's biggest mini-hydropower developer. It is, controlling more than 35.3 billion worth of hydropower generation assets.

Hedcor was the first company to win the bidding for a Napocor asset. It won in March 2004 the auction for the 5.5-megawatt Sibulan mini-hydropower plant in Davao for P1.27 million.

AEV has interests in power generation, power distribution, banking, food and transportation.

LOAN PROBLEMS?

We can help you!!!

DIONAMPO CONSULTING CORPORATION

SM starts construction of e-commerce facility

SM INVESTMENTS CORP. OF mall magnate Henry Sy, senior day broke ground on its P1.3 bil. Iloilo e-commerce building.

Dubbed SMart e-center, the building sits on a 94,000-square-meter lot right at the intersection SM Central Business Park near Mandu-Iloilo Bay. The project is slated for completion in July 2007.

SMart e-commCenter is a 10-story building with feasible area of 67,000 square meters. Seven floors will be for office space, two and a half floors for parking, and the ground floor for commercial uses.

Apart from BPOs, call centers, back office operations and other e-commerce-related companies, SMart e-commCenter will also accommodate financial services, consulting services, and even tourism-related offices. — Elizabeth L. Sandoval

FUNDAMENTALS OF SETTING UP AN NGO OR FOUNDATION SEMINAR, MARCH 16, 2006

Topics covered: legal aspects of getting organized, project planning, project management, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and sourcing funding, technical assistance, in donations-in-kind. Venue: Richville Hotel, 286 EDSA, Mandaluyong City, 1 PM-5:00 PM. Participants are requested to call Tribum Knowledge Center at tel. no. 531-6084 or CP. 0919-539-9777; 0919-229-9780; 0915-150-4379 to register. Email at: tribum@globelines.net or tkcp_ph@yahoo.com

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UAE lifts ban on RP processed meat exports

Halal certifying body accredited

By Ramzi W. Dumlao

THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, considered the gateway to the multi-billion dollar halal food market of the Middle East, has lifted the ban on Philippine processed meat and chicken products after authorities accredited a local halal certification body that would determine whether shipments are fit for the Middle East market.

Abdul Rahman El Tarouq, president of the Islamic Da'wah Council of the Philippines (IDCP), said that group was deemed competent to certify halal products as halal following a visit of UAE food officials to the Philippines in mid-2005.

Halal is an Arabic word that means "permissible" and, in relation to consumables, refers to products that Muslims are allowed to use, eat and drink.

The visit of the UAE mission – headed by the Assistant Secretary General of the UAE General Secretariat of Municipalities, the executive body that unites the different emirates, was aimed at assessing the possibility of resuming the purchase of halal products from the Philippines.

Two years ago, the UAE had stopped the entry of an undetermined volume of Philippine-made products due to the absence of proper certification that the products were prepared following Islamic requirements.

Lirong said the UAE team was expected to return to the Philippines to see the poultry processing facilities in Laguna, Bulacan and other parts of the country.

"This is the moment of halal certification the authorities want to make sure that everything used in and done to the products are halal – from the inputs used to the preparation and packaging of the products," Lirong explained.

"This first ever local animal-based product is certainly a significant feat for our export industry," Lirong said.

The UAE, with its huge ports and active trading, accounts for a substantial portion of the $700-billion-a-year global halal food market.

Philippine shipments thus far involved in a reservoir area in the UAE where local authorities seized cargoes of Philippine-made "halal" products in March, 2005.

Lirong said the fiasco was a result of product mix following the strict rules of halal production.

For this, IDCP is the only halal-certifying body in the country recognized by some halal international agencies such as the Jakarta-based World Halal Council.

New terminal at DMIA planned

By Beatrix L. Lucas

A CONSORTIUM COMPOSED OF THE ABA Group of Companies and the government of the Kingdom of Bahrain has unveiled plans to build a passenger terminal at the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport (DMIA) in Barangay Dolores (to build capacity to cater to them.

In a statement, AMA Group vice president Beatrice G. Ramos Jr. said the Bahrain government was "extremely interested in interest to the building of a modern passenger terminal, initially eight facilities" in Clark.

The plan is of further develop DMIA was "one of the most significant developments" of the recently held bilateral air consultations between the Philippines and Bahrain.

"The realization of this project would dramatically alleviate air traffic and congestion at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport," Ramos said.

Earlier the air traffic manager, officials of Clark Development Corp. (CDC) and Clark International Airport Corp., which owns and operates the airport, hosted a tour for the visiting delegation led by Bahrain Undersecretary for Civil Aviation Affairs Abdulrahman Mohamed Al Gamal and top officials of Gulf Air, the flagcarrier airline of Bahrain.

Mindanao as IT hub: Focus on contact center services - Part II

CYBERSERVICES IS A NEW TERM that describes services delivered via cyberspaces. There are information technology-driven services such as call centers, medical transcription, back office operations and animation.

Call center services is the largest sector in the local IT industry, accounting for 63 percent of the nation's total workforce. The Philippines has expanded its offerings—which used to focus on inbound customer support—to include outbound customer support services such as customer hardware troubleshooting. Yet are currently at par with global standards, clearly outpacing such India and China.

Such rapid growth has prompted neighboring call center companies are expanding its reach across the nation, seeking more competitive labor costs, and cheaper infrastructure and operational expenses. Southern Philippines is capital of such a continuance of growth.

Is Mindanao ready?

In its recent report, the Commission on Information and Communications Technology (CICT) projected that the call center sector would have to employ 300,000 agents to meet client needs in 2010. In order to achieve this, call centers should not limit their Mindanao activities on recruitment for outsourcing purposes alone. Such big base is beneficial considering the many perks offered by Mindanao cities—the availability of cheaper and reliable power and communication infrastructure, less expensive cost of living, good incentives for IT firms, and local government support.

Mindanao is also opening itself to advancements as it targets cyberservices to be the industry that will not only boost the economy but will also answer the people from leaving home. The redistribution of wealth, the influx of talents, the trained communities and many more investments from other sectors are positive effects of call center presence in the provinces.

Local communities and its leaders recognize Mindanao's potentials in providing call center needs to the same level as the rest of the country. Business groups and business organizations incorporate and unify in order to make Mindanao cities an attractive and safe location for the industry's growth.

Next: IT Hub

The widespread investment promotion campaign staged by various Mindanao stakeholders expressed the interest of some of the well known call centers and prompted them to visit major Mindanao cities for possible expansion. Its San Cayetano de Davao Diomo City attracted four call center companies. My own own company, top Bagan Innovation Inc., will be opening a state-of-the-art training academy for call center agents and personnel in partnership with Jobs 'R' Kennedy Foundation, and a call center. The academy will open in April and the call center, in June this year. The training center will help ensure the availability of skilled manpower to serve the needs of IT companies and BPOs that intend to locate their businesses in Davao and nearby cities like Gen. Santos.

Mindanao recognizes its capacity to deliver investor requirements in setting up call center operations. We produce competitive graduates with excellent reasoning skills, English communication and computer skills, and workers flexible in various work environments. And of course, Mindanaoans are famous for being friendly, smart-ass and industrious individuals—a plus point in the line of work.

Mindanao, however, has its own challenges and limitations. For one, not all cities have IT parks and zones, and this discourages IT investors who seek additional incentives that an IT park/zone could offer and flexible requirements. Most of the cities are yet to follow Cagayan de Oro's Pueblo de Oro IT Park, the first of its kind. But hopes are optimistic as all is set.

There is no reason why Davao and Cagayan and the rest of Mindanao cannot become the IT hub for the Southern part of the country and of the East Asian region.

After all, everything else is in place—competent manpower and adequate communication and transportation infrastructures.

Dah Ingan Blaza is an advocate for Mindanao ; chair of the Mindanao NGO and Mindanao representative to Japan Business Federation (Keidanren). E-mail comments to jojiblaza@yahoo.com

Republic of the Philippines
OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN
Ombudsman Building, Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City

OFFICE ORDER NO. OO-2005
Series of 2005

TO : ALL CONCERNED

SUBJECT : REVISED CODE OF CONDUCT FOR OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN AND THE PROCUREMENT PROCESS

DATE : OCTOBER 20, 2005

I. PURPOSE

Procurement involves disbursement of public funds or funds placed under its official custody and the use of public property. Hence, every procurement activity by the Office of the ombudsman is and managed by those involved in the procurement process, likely corruptive and outright if breaches are avoided.

This Code is a set of principles and standards of good governance and it has inserted efforts to adhere to the principles of transparency, accountability, equity, efficiency, competitiveness and economy in the conduct of its procurement of Goods and Consulting Services and in contracting Infrastructure Projects. To ensure the integrity of the procurement process in the Office, it is essential to establish a substantial Code of Conduct for all its officials and employees involved in the procurement process.

II. SCOPE

This Commission Code of Conduct shall apply to all officials and employees of the Office of the Ombudsman, whether permanent, casual, temporary, under the COS, the COS, the BAC, secretariat, the PMO, HOPE, the TWG, the Consulting Services, the Planning and Budget Division, the Conference, and the Offices who are responsible in the conduct, implementation and post-implementation and award.

III. POLICIES AND PRACTICES

Section 1. Definition of Terms

As used herein, the terms:

1.1 Procurement – refers to the acquisition of Goods and Consulting Services, and the contracting for Infrastructure Projects by the Office of the Ombudsman.

1.2 Goods – refers to all items, supplies, materials, equipment and general support services.

1.3 Consulting Services – refer to services for Infrastructure Projects and other types of projects or activities of Government requiring adequate external technical and professional expertise, including advisory and review services, pre-investment or feasibility studies, design, construction supervision, management and related services, and other technical services or special studies.

1.4 Infrastructure Projects – Civil Works – include the construction, improvement, rehabilitation or demolition of roads and bridges, railways, airports, seaports, communication facilities, civil works components of information technology projects, irrigation, flood control and drainage, water supply, sanitary and sewerage & solid waste management systems, shore protection, energy, power and electrification facilities, national buildings, school buildings, hospital buildings, and buildings of a commercial or industrial nature, including associated services and other related activities.

1.5 Code – refers to the Commission Code of Conduct for the Office of the Ombudsman BAC and the other Committees. Offices involved in procurement.

1.6 Office – refers to the Office of the Ombudsman.

1.7 OIC – refers to a duly designated officer-in-charge to take in another, and shall include a designated acting or a designated officer-in-the-post.

1.8 Benefit – refers to or right, privilege, advantage, preference or any other similar act of favorability in favor of another.

1.9 BAC Secretariat – refers to the members of the support staff to the BAC and Technical Committee and the members of the pre-selected Goods Suppliers / Contractors / etc. who to operate in cases of emergency, or entities that supply Goods and consulting services and contracts for Infrastructure Projects.

1.10 BAC – Bids and Awards Committee

1.11 TWG – Technical Working Group

1.12 TOR – Technical Inspection Group

1.13 PMO – Project Management Office

1.14 HOPE – Head of the Procuring Entity

1.15 GOCC – General Services Division

1.16 IRR-A – Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A

1.17 COA – Commission on Audit

1.18 NGO – Non-Government Organization

1.19 PMSD – Procurement Service Department of Budget and Management

1.20 FMS – Finance and Management Services

1.21 End-user – refers to the officials and employees of the unit for which the Goods, Consulting Services and Infrastructure Projects are intended.

1.22 Contractor to the Contract – refer to the Officials who execute and sign the contract / agreement for the Office.

Section 2. General Principles

The Chairman and Members of the Ombudsman BAC, TWG, TOR, the BAC Secretariat, and the officials and employees of the PMO / HOPE, PMO, Planning and Budget Division, Accounting Division, Consulting Unit, and other employees of the Office, while in the performance of their duties and responsibilities as such, shall:

2.a Adhere strictly to the principles and provisions of laws and rules promoting transparency, accountability, equity, efficiency, competitiveness, competitiveness and economy in procurement;

2.b Strictly avoid all situations that may give rise or tend to give rise to situations of conflict of interest or appearance of conflict of interest. Should a conflict of interest arise, pursuant to Rule V of OMB Office Order Number 20-13 dated January 20, 2005, on the Norms of Behavior for Officials and Employees of the Office of the Ombudsman, it shall be the duty of the concerned official or employee to immediately disclose the same to his/her immediate supervisor and terminate the cause, by way of a written declaration. The said official or employee shall be capable of interest may be done periodically or by every contracting process.

2.c Reasonably refrain from soliciting gifts or accepting, directly or indirectly, gifts and favors, or anything of monetary value from the contractors, consultants and/or candidates regardless of whether or not said suppliers, contractors and/or consultants are transacting business with the Office at the time the offer is made;

2.d Reasonably refrain from accepting invitations or offers from suppliers, contractors and/or consultants or their representatives for meetings and conferences outside the Office;

2.e Strictly refrain from entering into private contacts or interactions with suppliers, contractors and/or consultants. The latter are not allowed to enter the Office premises, unless necessary in pursuance of official functions in which case their stay shall not be longer than what is required to finish their official transaction;

2.f Strictly adhere to the mandated time frames as provided for in Republic Act No. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (the IRR), the TOR, the BAC, and the PMO / HOPE;

2.g Refrain from unduly influencing or exerting undue pressure upon any member of the BAC or any officer or employee of the procuring entity or office to take a particular action which favors, or tends to favor a particular supplier, contractor and/or consultant;

2.h Strictly refrain from inviting or guests and getting an escort, arrange, personally or assure the suppliers, contractors and/or consultants transacting business with the Office, or their representatives, unless the same is part of the official duties of the BAC, TWG, TOR, PMO/HOPE, BAC Secretariat, PMO, Planning and Budget Division, Accounting Division, Committee, Unit as well as appropriate to the extent;

2.i Strictly observe the norms of behavior enumerated under Office Order Number 20-13 dated January 20, 2005, particularly on the provisions relating to Conflict of Interests and Confidentiality of proceedings.

Section 3. Specific Provisions

3.1 For the Bids and Awards Committee –

3.1.a Be familiar with the performance of its duties and responsibilities; shall

3.1.b Only have official contacts with suppliers, contractors and/or consultants whenever necessary during the pre-bid conference and opening of bids;

3.1.c Perform their contracting procurement transactions/activities from suppliers, contractors and/or consultants except through the BAC Secretariat;

3.1.d Attend the regular meetings of the BAC as scheduled.

3.2 For the BAC Secretariat –

3.2.a The BAC Secretariat, in the performance of its duties and responsibilities, shall:

3.2.a.1 Only have official contacts with suppliers, contractors and/or consultants whenever necessary during the bidding process;

3.2.a.2 Prepare the necessary reports and proper recording of all transactions/activities in the procurement process and submit the same to the BAC for its information and appropriate action;

3.2.a.3 Be under the direct control, supervision and monitoring of the BAC.

3.3 For the Technical Working Group –

3.3.a The TWG, in the performance of its duties and responsibilities, shall:

3.3.a.1 Only have official contacts with the concerned suppliers, contractors and/or consultants whenever necessary during the pre-bid conference, the opening of bids, the evaluation and post-qualification process, and before submission of the Evaluation Report;

3.3.a.2 Prepare the requirements on the suppliers, contractors and/or consultants' business affairs, previous experiences, capital, assets and liabilities commensurate. The data of supplier suspension and delisting from the BAC's list of suppliers shall be updated by the TWG and uniformly from the BAC for monitoring purposes. In no case shall the TWG use other resources than that of the Office in the conduct of such evaluation;

3.3.a.3 Prepare a brief report for the BAC after every bid or negotiation indicating the reasons of their and the supporting documents, clearly and sufficiently enough to enable the BAC to make its decision and in compliance with the bidding guidelines and accounting rules and regulations;

3.3.a.4 Prepare the Technical Evaluation Report and submit the same to the BAC within the prescribed period provided in IRR-A, HOPE and its IRR-A.

3.4 For the Technical Inspection Group –

3.4.a The TIG, in the performance of its duties and responsibilities, shall:

3.4.a.1 Only have official contact with the suppliers, contractors and/or consultants during the delivery and acceptance of the delivered goods or the completion of the performance of the general support services rendered in the office.

3.4.a.2 Conduct inspections of deliveries of goods and evaluation of general support services rendered to the Office by the suppliers or contractors

- In the presence of the end-user, property custodian, and PMO Officer; and
- By visitors or a per delivery and per installation basis.

3.4.a.3 Strictly comply with the Office requirements in the conduct of inspection of goods, and the evaluation of the general support services rendered to the Office by the suppliers or contractors.

3.5 For the Property Management Section / General Services Division – Property and Supply Unit (PSU) – in the performance of their duties and responsibilities, shall:

3.5.a Only have official contact with the concerned suppliers, contractors and/or consultants' accredited representatives whenever necessary for the acceptance of the Purchase Order (PO), the Job Order (JO) or Contract/Agreement, during the delivery of goods or general support services, and billing, the submission of documents for payments. The PMO/GSD shall, in case of doubtful delivery, contact the suppliers or contractors' accredited representatives if a need to get information on the delivery of goods or general support services and in the conduct of market studies.

3.5.a Prepare reports and keep the records on procurement transactions/activities brought to PSU / GSD for submission to the Overall Deputy Ombudsman.

3.6 For the Finance and Management Services, the Planning and Budget Division, the Accounting Division and the Cashiering Unit –

3.6.a Only have official contacts with the Planning and Budget Division, the Accounting Division and the Cashiering Unit, in the performance of their duties and responsibilities as such, shall:

3.6.a.1 Expeditiously process payments of claims arising from procurement and for which the Notice of Case Allocation has been received and all supporting documents are submitted by the concerned suppliers and the PMO/GSD.

3.6.a.2 Accordingly act on payment requirements in the respective general and subsidiary ledgers.

3.6.a.3 Harmoniously coordinate with PMO/GSD to minimize any discrepancies in the inventory of goods.

3.6.a.4 Properly coordinate with the concerned officials/units to obtain the documents or information needed for the processing of claims for payments arising from procurement.

3.7 For the Signatories to the Contract –

The Officials of the Office who are authorized signatories to the contracts or agreements shall act within the prescribed period as provided for under Republic Act No. 9184 and its IRR-A.

3.8 For the End-User –

The end-user shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

3.8.a Maintain and update records of goods received, consumed, issued and stocked.

3.8.b Submit to the Overall Deputy Ombudsman or the BAC a report concerning any discrepancy, irregularity or defect in the procurement process, immediately after discovery thereof, including recommendations for appropriate action.

Section 4. Accountability

All officials and employees involved in procurement shall strictly comply with the provisions of this Code and shall be held responsible and accountable. To strengthen accountability, a regular review of compliance as well as lapses or transgressions discovered shall be made by an independent Review Committee to be created for the purpose.

Section 5. Transparency

The transparency, officials and employees having custody of documents pertaining to procurement, which are not classified as confidential, shall make such documents available for inspection by any interested party, upon the request of the interested party indicating the legal purpose, subject to prior approval of the Bids and Awards Committee. For this purpose, contract signatures shall be maintained by the BAC and the Property Unit / GSD, as the case may be, in their respective official records description, date and form of contract, names and addresses of the participating bidders/contractors/consultants, contract terms, date of bid/award conducted by the independent public bidders and audit report, the names of all personnel involved in the procurement process.

IV. PENALTIES / SANCTIONS

Any violation of these Rules shall be a ground for disciplinary action, without prejudice to the filing of appropriate criminal charges against the erring official and/or employee.

V. APPEARS CLAUSE

In any provision of this Code is later unconstitutional, other provisions not affected thereby shall remain valid and operative.

VI. EFFECTIVITY

This Office Order shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette and upon the filing with the Academy of the Philippine Law Center of three (3) certified copies thereof, including its publication in a newspaper of general circulation for three (3) consecutive weeks.

MARGARITO P. GERVACIO, JR.
The Overall Deputy Ombudsman

(PIA – March 9, 10 & 11, 2006)

ENCOURAGE THE SPIRIT OF OPTIMISM

LET THE ENTREPRENEURSHIP REVOLUTION LIVE ON!

We apologize for the hundreds of people who were not accommodated during the Go Negosyo Entrepreneurship Summit. The massive turnout was much more than we expected. With this remarkable success, let us continue to be our countrymen's source of courage and inspiration as they pursue their business ideas. Let us all focus our energies on entrepreneurship! To the more than 50,000 people who visited the Go Negosyo Entrepreneurship Expo, thank you and we hope we have inspired you and provided you with the information you will need to start your business.

See you in our upcoming events:
•Micro NeGOsyo Fair at the Philippine Army Gym, Fort Bonifacio from 31 March to 2 April 2006
•Agri NeGOsyo in October 2006*
•OFW NeGOsyo in December 2006*

*Venue and date to be announced

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PLDT

INQUIRER

STREET food in a mall /C2

LIFESTYLE

The joy of cooking with charcoal

JOY Charcoal Stove

KITCHEN RESCUE

Reggie Aglaloa

Of three different coal stoves, Obligar's invention is the most economical: 'bulalo,' cooked for six hours, costs only P30

TAKE GREAT PRIDE IN BEING Filipino. As a race, we perhaps belong to a league all of our own. Indeed, we are a highly adaptable, resilient, ingenious and brilliant breed!

Take Pinoy inventor Raul Obligar, an engineer whose invention in 1976 should have made headline news but didn't because he was too ahead of his time.

Decades after, with the surge in power and LPG costs, people are taking notice.

I made mention of Joy Charcoal Stove many moons ago when I first saw it at the blackouts during the Chinese New Year fete. And to this day people have not stopped asking me about what that charcoal stove was, what the fuss found in, and if it is really well-made is.

Due to the clamor of the people, I am now doing a full feature on Joy, the best stove in its class in the country.

They have released new model that is much improved. It now comes in bronze, with a gold coal ash tray for easy cleaning. Unlike other coal-fueled stoves, this one has a ripple-lime to adjust heat from low, medium to high. It, too, has a barbecue pit option and a handle, making it so convenient to take with you anywhere, even to the beach this Holy Week!

We have three different coal stoves at home and compared to other gas ranges, this one is the most economical: P5 worth of coal lasts an hour. In mid-week all-off P30 is enough for 6 hours of cooking time and just one charcoal change! Sibugang baka at P15, with an charcoal change! Sweet deal!

It is also ramadoras, making it worthy of a place in your architect sketches, it is the only Pinoy stove that won won international recognition!

So, is it all worth it? You bet!

Call Raul and Joy Mendiola at 4343060, 0919-3775284, 0917-4619798 or 0920-8173356

I am a culinary arts student wondering if you have a source for cheaper chefs uniforms and clogs. I have asked around and they are quite costly.

Most power to you and thanks in advance.

BRET S

You might want to try Cross professional swiss clogs from Colorado!

I got myself a red pair and they are so comfortable! Though they feel kind of weird at first because they are too light, like you have jelly on your feet. It weighs six ounces. It is rested, so air passes through, keeping feet cool, it is slip-, odor- and bacteria-resistant. It is also easy to clean—just wipe or wash and liberate!

I am told that they are now used by those who stay on their feet for hours—doctors, nurses, chefs. If you ask me, they are wonderful for gardening, yachting and just about anything. They have a lunch and a flip-flop on its mouth!

Chefs Cash Exchange Inc. is the authorized distributor of Cross Shoe/Clogs. They also make chefs jackets and aprons at reasonable prices. Call Lex Adaza at 4282000.

Traditional recipes

Heirloom recipes are by themselves little treasures. Through them, we keep the memories

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HAP Chan's Mixed Pork with lettuce

Street food far from the madding traffic

ASSORTED pastries from Icing's Cake and Coffee Shop

Text by Linda B. Bolido
Photos by Jim Bales Pasuit

MARKET! MARKET! IS NOW SERVing a slice of Asia with a sprinkling of pizzazz beyond.

Whether you are a gourmet, a gourmand or simply someone wanting to experience other countries by savouring their distinctive cuisine, you can now get bites of Japan, Vietnam, Thailand, Korea, China, and a few other exotic places in just one destination—the new Forest Market.

Though designed like a group of sidewalk eating places, the covered Forest Market offers more comfort—you get to use the outdoors but are far away enough from the road to be spared the dust and the fumes. You don't get burned when the sun is out and don't get drenched when it rains. The air under the market roof is kept a little cooler than the actual temperature outside. Many of the seating areas also have a few tables set up in enclosed, air-conditioned spaces.

Forest Market complements the collection of eateries and malls on the other side of the mall's entrance—the distinctly Filipino Pasta Market, Jo Gumbal, dean of the Philippine School for Interior Design, hung colorful oriental-looking lanterns and lamps (made of resin rather than the traditional paper) and set up a Zen garden with water fountains to give the brainstormers an authentic look.

You don't have to leave Forest Market in search of a filling meal or a simple but flavorful snack. Some establishments are also not found elsewhere or only have one or two other outlets outside of the market.

As of now, your choices of eating places include Hap Chan's, Sow Ee Ling, Nicholas Steak House, Icing's Cake and Coffee Shop, Mr. Sushi, Asian, Suey Sum, Asian Noodles, Sukiyaki, Ala Dish, Hong Kong Street Food, Koji, Kimbap, Yakyniku, Dish It, Sushiya and Hoseno and Eggs.

You can buy snack items, chickeye and others from D&C, an oriental confectionery store; Toffpunkt, a German-Swiss delicatessen and store; Konditor Japanese Bandits; Thai Deli; Shanghai Fried Siopao; Holland Hopkie Lord Stow's Bakery and Hong Mars.

And if you decide to check out Forest Market any evening soon, you get an additional treat—one of the company's top musicians are scheduled to perform weekends from 7 p.m. onwards at Market! Market!

Until March 31, The Club, March 11; Sagarbua, March 17; Hongkong, March 18; Kamakura, March 24; Bokyoung, March 25; Shanghai, March 31; Tree Park, April 1; Shanghai, April 7; and Korea, April 8.

Market! Market! at Bonifacio Global City, Taguig, is open 11 a.m.-9 p.m., Monday-Thursday, and 11 a.m.-9 p.m., Friday-Sunday.

WOK Be Asian Noodles

MARKET! Market! and Ayala Malls executives Francis Rivera, Nerie Ubaldo, Miriam Katigbak, Reanne Tanmiten, Charmaine Basaen, Cora Blaso and Cathy Bongco

500 Hi Sang specialties in Korean dishes.

500 Hi Sang shake shake

Sunday family brunch buffet

HOTEL PHILIPPINE PLAZA presents MAPalooza Family Sunday Brunch at the Café Plaza. Toucan Puckles, complete with live entertainment and surprises like face painting, computing, clowns, balloon twisters, and magic show; plus free use of the swimming pool during the day. The buffet spread includes kids' favorites such as mini-pizzas, crispy fried chicken, baked macaroni, hotdogs, burgers, sausages and marshmallow.

Food stations will offer pasta, barbecue, carving station, dirty ice cream, chocolate fountain and popcorn. Adults can enjoy the free-flowing assortment of wines at Café Plaza from 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. and the Poolside at level 1555.

DINING OUT MARIA HIRAYA'S

Restaurants offering a graduation set menu consisting of Polenta Caesar Salad, Herb Dill Onion Soup, Grilled Beef Tenderloin in Green Peppercorn Sauce with croquette potatoes, Caramelized Mango Cheesecake with ice cream and coffee or tea or a set of tempered coffee or tea. Available for lunch or dinner for P1,350++ per person until March 31. Call 818-3872 or local 2505.

IN THE CHEF'S MODEL AVAILABLE'S Café Jeepney gives special treats to graduates. Offers a special lunch and dinner buffet with free or more persons. The graduate can choose between a free buffet meal for himself or a complimentary buffet of chocolate mousse for his group. At Prince Albert Restaurant, graduates dining with a group of four or more guests will be entitled to either a free bottle of house wine or one round of non-alcoholic drinks for his group. Graduates must present their diplomas. Call 8481111 for reservations. The special offer is from March 17-April 9. Cafe Jeepney also offers Indian dishes until March 15.

ASIDE from Leslie selection of pastries, the Hotel Philippine Plaza's buffet includes kids' favorites like mini pizzas, crispy fried chicken, hotdogs, burgers, and marshmallow.

SUPER KOREA BY CHINA is serving all gluttonous their choice of any of the restaurant's specially roasted dishes for free until March 31, for a minimum purchase of P1,000 at any Super Bowl of China or Big Bubble restaurant. The graduate gets a free regular order of a noodle dish of his choice.

Opening on March 11 is Super Bowl SM Valenzuela.

CROWNE PLAZA GALLERIA presents "Graduation Stories" until March 31 at the lobby's Xin Tian Di Restaurant. The restaurant's guest master chef from China, Li Chun Peng, showcases a taste of Szechuan such as Tea-Smoked Smoked Duck with Chinese Bun, Spicy Bun Bun Noodles, Sautéed Lobster with Red Pepper and Deep-Fried Tofu in Five Spice Powder. Call 6331333 local 1298.

SAKAE SUSHI offers Power Lunch set meals, Monday to Saturday, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Set meals include Tori Karaage, Sosuji Katsujuki, Salmon Miso Yaki. Each set has a choice of miso soup, gohan, salad, maguro sashimi, green tea and ice cream. Sakae Sushi is at The Fort, Greenhill West Park, Global City. Call 8403402.

CROWNE HOTEL invites you to celebrate your child's graduation at one of its restaurants. Palm Court Café offers sumptuous international buffets; Restaurant Le Bellevue, hearty Iberian-continental specialties, and Yorahama, authentic Japanese cuisine. Cocktail at the crowds between restaurants and Palm Court Bar and Sky Lounge. Music: Bar is "Spanish Fiesta", unique blend of coffee, arctic vodka, and caramel blue. It comes with "Mini-Bar Graduate" for the price of P900.++. Mike is the hotel's puppy mascot for the Year of the Dog. Call 6350000.

The joy of cooking . . .

From page C1

restaurant Plaza Food and Country family tradition alive. "Bulalo" is one of those little books that give big insights into a family that takes great pride in their heritage and their cooking traditions. A great read as well as a fantastic source of traditional recipes from Negros and other Visayan provinces. Copies (and eggs, since they also sell fresh eggs) in Kalayaan Ave., for additional copies, call Sarah at 6527962 and 6527541.

Do you have a recipe for intense soy paste and kinilaw? Are you planning to cook it for any boyfriend's birthday?

SHOOT!

Wow! Inihaw and kinilaw with beer? Your husband will love you forever! Happy birthday to your hubby!

Here are some of the recipes from the book "Sinibuk." Exactly why you must get a copy!

Seafood Kinilaw

- 300 g fresh white fish fillet (tilapia/apa)
- 150 g blanched shrimps, squid or baby octopus
- ½ red onion, thinly sliced
- ½ cucumber, peeled and cut to bite-size strips
- 3 small tomatoes, yellow or red, halved
- 1 ½ tbsp ginger, chopped fine
- 2 tbsp scallion
- Juice: 1 tbsp calamansi
- ¼ c spiced cane vinegar
- 1/4 c coconut milk
- Salt and pepper, to taste (You get the exact quantity of salt and pepper when you buy the book! [Aba! It's a joke!])

Cut seafood in bite-size pieces and mix with vegetables. Add sauce ingredients and mix well.

Let sit at least 15 minutes before serving. Do not put marinate the fish, it will destroy the flavor.

Garnish with chopped pork chicharon

Maria Binaday's Inihaw na Pusit

- 1 kg squid, loose, cleaned

Marinade:

- ½ c soy sauce
- ¼ c brown sugar
- ¼ c native vinegar
- 3 clove minced garlic
- ½ tsp crushed peppercorns
- 2-3 pcs siling labuyo, diced
- ¼ c cooking oil (for basting)

Combine in a saucepan, bring to a boil. Cool.

Once half the mixture is cool, add the squid. Reserve the rest for basting and as dipping sauce.

In the basting sauce, add ¼ c cooking oil. Grill on seven minutes, basting with sauce.

Serve with reserve sauce for dipping.

My Gourmet Cookware 3 does, and's next week. Call 6333162 or 8189098 for schedules.

E-mail the author at inspo@inquirer.com.ph

ARJAN dish of bodiones, chicken cooked in coconut milk with chopped banana pit (above)

We need to inform foreign tourists in Boracay about our flavor preferences and how we cook our excellent ingredients

A taste of Aklan cooking in Boracay

BUT I RECENTLY took flight (via Iloilo) to Boracay last weekend. What better way to escape the turmoil in Manila?

I first visited Boracay ages ago when there was no mall or delineation of areas into what are now called stations. The food was flame-broiled fresh lapu-lapu, grilled pork barbecue and German dishes of sausages and potato salad.

The biggest thing then was an English breakfast, which was really just bread, jam and butter. I had hoped I would find more Filipino cooking, especially what I had on the trade to local, in the province of Aklan.

Of all the food we consumed in the province, it is cracker-ish that I remember best and miss most. Pinamis Mirasol's, the hyperactive and keen octogenarian, kept his promise to a group of writers and photographers that we would get to taste the dish so others find out its ideas.

Inabanot is chicken cooked in coconut milk with chopped ubad, the pith of the banana plant. This first taste was pure bliss, a creamy soup with ubad bits that seem to take on the texture of rice.

Inabanot was what I looked for on the dinner menu every visit and every visit thereafter. But it was only last weekend that I tasted it again where we stayed, the Boracay Tropics Resort.

Owners Bert and Coly Sevilla prepared a spread for lunch and what a spread! Better than they thought they'd have, they should be name cooking of the

SUPREMA Pacita, a special variety of glutinous rice cooked slowly in liquid panocha done only during the Christmas season in barrio Dit Borocay, Kalibo

COUNTRY COOKING

Mickey Fenix

place.

Memories

Tasting inabanot again brought back memories. Bert Sevilla is from Kalibo, and he reminisced about the cooking in his hometown. Broiled, he said, was chicken marinated in its own juice inside a bamboo that was cooked over charcoal. Singkil, a lot of salt and probably shell were all that's needed for the flavoring and aroma. Then he explained that the tamales served to us by his wife Coly at breakfast and was, thankfully, still there at lunch, was only cooked in his barrio, Old Buswang in Kalibo.

The tamales was made of malagkit mixed with liquefied panocha and cooked for hours. The Sevillas must have asked the cooks to make an exception for their guests that weekend as the tamales was usually cooked only during Christmas.

My cute Aklan memories led to be ding up from old files.

At take of the seaside beer gardens, where the waves continually sun sprays of sea water on the customers along the shore, there was the best grilled food, fish and pork barbecued to perfection by grill masters.

What caught my attention at the restaurant was the fondue of shrimps. It was the sweetest shrimp I've ever tasted despite its being soaked in what Dennis S. Fernandez described as "liquid fire," a chilled paste description for tomato-ish sambal.

The sweetness was a sure sign of freshness, helpfulness, no doubt, by the coconut milk. But as a counterpoint, some salted black beans were added.

Instant 'sinigang'

My partook of the sinigang of shrimps, sour and fast and perfect for that evening. The researcher in me made me ask what souring fruit was used, expecting batuan, a sinatong sound green fruit mainly used in the Visayas to for the sinigang. I almost fell off my chair from laughing when the waiter answered, "Knorr." So easy, especially those in the food business, can refuse convenience and an affordable alternative.

Like many true gardens, mine was just piped in but was food and fun mixed anger-wannabes. All the women in our group ordered here while the men had sinkolom. Well, guess to what they served the best?

As the evening grew, we had a view of the mangroves, making us hopeful that Aklanons know how the Spanish like are trees filtered the water, served as fish and crab sanctuary, protected the border between sea and land. Indeed, Coly Sevilla informed me that there were now an Eco Park Baldarosa, this time at the barrio New Buswang in Kalibo.

Perhaps next time, the Inabanot will serve the other dishes I had in Aklan. "Pare-o should be sinkilak style as black with the orange meat and the elongated bayagnes. Why not the seaweed called lato lato that looks like green flowers? And please do have the shrimp/coconut with coconut milk and salted black beans.

Boracay boasts of good cooking but you usually hear of Italian pizza and gelato, Greek Mediterranean or Spanish food. Try looking for Filipino food and you get the usual Asian fare which isn't something to sniff at and an important part of our cuisine.

But there are so many other dishes cooked every hour the grill. We need to inform the many foreign tourists at this white-sand paradise about our flavor preferences and how we cook our excellent ingredients. And if we can tell them about Aklan and our country through the food, that's better than any brochure or tourist guide.

Lunch for 24 is served everyday in Boracay via Cocolicious. Call 6036200.

For reservations at Boracay's Tropics Resort Hotel, call 6036465 (Manila) or (036) 2888004 (Boracay Island).

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DIPLOMA IN PROFESSIONAL CULINARY ARTS PROGRAM

Winners can end up losers

By Linda B. Bolido

I THOUGHT I WAS LUCKY. I got a text message saying, "Globe telecoms & cash congress for winning Nokia 7610 in our network. To claim your prize pls call toll free no. (prefix is 0906) 371 5620 prize #2838 series of 2005."

Then a friend forwarded this message: "Dradrio's of (a foundation) inform u dat ur online no. won PhP50,000.00 (nd prize winner also bat 10/19/05). To claim now I'm here ...." The prefix of the sender's number is 0913.

If second prize is P500,000, makers you wonder what first prize is. Mor tmoro you wonder what kind of work the fundation does. I'm sure many prizes like that. They probably do charity work for cell phone users.

Some series deserve an A for effort. Despite disclaimers from mobile phone companies (Globe, of course, said the message I got was a hoax, which I do not fully favor because I didn't use it) cash, duty-spend money send, top-up phone messages—from a simple "you win 500 text..." to the impressive prize of four-wheeled, all wear cooking it sound authentic by giving a LTO permit number.

But "fees" are required to claim prizes—from a few hundreds to a few thousands—and people never get their winnings. The scam must pay, otherwise why would these brains continue?

THE CONSUMER

We can only repeat what has been said before and no doubt will be said again and again. If it seems too good to be true, it usually is.

Incomplete information

Tina Dee is grateful that Allstate Sky, a stockholder of Air Silver Ips in Del Monte Avenue, Quezon City, promised to act on her complaint.

She explained that Ace was a freelance offering education in their various goods. She had the diligence to phone the company first to ask about "rates and requirements so as to be prepared for everything and not be inconvenienced."

She said the staff failed to specify requirements—no swimming suits. "All I was told was to bring towels and bathing suits." But when they got there, her husband's swimming shorts were considered inappropriate.

They bought the problem of miscommunication to the attention of a company officer. But she said the guy, instead of apologizing, insinuated that "consumers who make a fuss are only out to extract preferential treatment."

Dee said, if they could not abide the rules considering they gave incomplete information, the executive could at least have given the assurance that steps would be taken to avoid such a problem in the future to stand suffering at some hidden agenda behind her complaint.

She said the employees, including the guards, were more courteous and apologetic. In her letter to Sky, Dee said such behavior should have been displayed by an executive who, upon their first encounter, represented the company to customers.

In his response, Sky apologized for his late reply saying he was away on a business trip and for the distress and inconvenience the incident might have caused. He added, "We duly place great importance on the conduct of our employees. Thank you for bringing this matter to our attention. Rest assured your complaint will give us the opportunity to successfully any problems that may arise. We hope that you will give us another chance to serve you."

Not PLDT's

Eleanor Lyndon, institutional manager of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company (PLDT), said the Internet dial-up service a reader was asking about (column of March 2) was not PLDT's.

Other regular columns, Atienza is Orion is Bulletproof. Wanna send Mercedes Cabral Corner Cory Quirino, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Makati and Ayala Ave., Makati City; PO Box 2105 Makati Central Post Office, 1282 Makati, or e-mail lbolido@inquirer.com.ph.—Editor)